

UNE Faculty of Humanities, Arts, Social Sciences and Education presents

Grounding Story

7th Biennial ASLEC-ANZ Conference 2019

Storytelling,
activism and
environmental
change

February 13—15

**University
of New England**

Armidale, NSW

Featured talks and events

Dr Daniel Hikuroa

Prof Greta Gaard

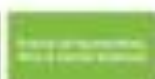
A/Prof Thom van Dooren

Anaiwan Language Revival Program

Dr Alison Whittaker

Terror Nullus by Soda_Jerk
(Film Screening)

Surviving New England: Our Koori
Matriarchs – Part One (Exhibition)



For more info visit:
une.edu.au/groundingstory

Dangana ndaga? Nyanja ndaga wajan?

[How are you? What brings you here]

This conference is taking place on unceded Anaiwan Country.

We pay our respect to all of their Elders: past, present and emerging.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgement of Country	2
Acknowledgements & General Information	4
Maps	5
Program Overview	7-10
Art Installations and Exhibitions	11
Keynote and Plenary Abstracts and Bios	12-19
Alphabetised Speaker Bios	20-47
<u>Lunch Events:</u>	
A Letter to the Trees (Thursday Lunch Event)	48
Plumwood Mountain Launch (Friday Lunch Event)	48
<u>Evening Events:</u>	
Matriarch Exhibition (Wednesday Evening – Free)	49
Walkshop (Thursday Afternoon – Free For Delegates)	50
Conference Dinner (Thursday Evening – Ticketed)	50
<i>Terror Nullius</i> Screening (Friday Evening – Ticket included in registration, extra tickets for sale)	51

Acknowledgements

Conference Organising Committee:

Dr Jennifer Mae Hamilton (UNE)

Dr Alexis Harley (LaTrobe – President, ASLEC-ANZ)

Dr Stephen Harris (UNE)

Dr Grace Moore (Otago – Immediate Past President, ASLEC-ANZ)

Huw Nolan (UNE)

Dr Kate Wright (UNE)

Special thanks to (in alphabetical order!):

Dan and Dom Angeloro (Soda_Jerk), The Armidale Tree Group (esp. Dave), Hannah Collett, Professor Jane Edwards, The Goldfish Bowl Bakery (esp. Trent and Matt), Pat Harris, Janna Hayes, Dr Bronwyn Hopwood, Jazzamataz Catering (esp. Eiluned and Paul), Craig Johnson, Sharon Marshall, Professor Alan Scott, Francesca Stahlut, Jay Westfold, Professor Adrian Walsh, Professor Michael Wilmore. And to the people we've inevitably forgotten: thank you – this has been such an awesome team effort!

Poster and Bag Design: Pat Harris

Conference Dinner Band: *The Commontones* (Pat, Steve and Tom)

Food: Catering is by Eiluned Noble from Jazzamataz in Armidale. It is a fully vegetarian menu with vegan and gluten free options. Tea, Coffee and Water will be available throughout the day. Food outlets on campus are Booliminbah Collection (in Booliminbah) and UNE Life and The 'Stro. They are all just a few minutes' walk from the main conference venues, if you need a particular coffee or have different food requirement not covered by our catering!

Internet: UNE is connected to the global *eduroam* network. If you have eduroam, your devices should automatically connect once you arrive on campus. If not, to access the **UNEGuest** network use the password: **ASLEC-ANZ-2019**. For more on eduroam, visit <https://www.eduroam.edu.au/>

Workspace/Rest space: If you need a space to work or rest during the conference, the MacLab on the Lower Ground of Arts Building E11 is set up for both sitting and talking, but also has a bunch of desks and couches that are free to use. This is the same room as the Conference Rego.

Transport: Cars, Free Bus, \$2 Bus and Bike. More info about getting here and around go to <https://www.facebook.com/events/242042266723605/>

Parking at UNE

Tickets are available from any of the Parking Machines on campus. There is a machine in the Clarks rd car park indicated on the map below. Other Ticket Machines which are located at: Elm Ave, Booloominbah Drive, Southern Car Park, Psychology Lane, Western Car Park and Northern Car Park. The cost of parking on campus is:

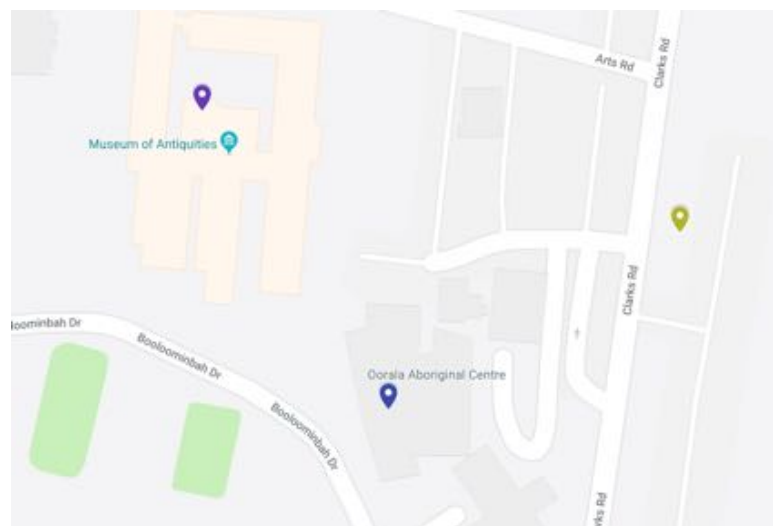
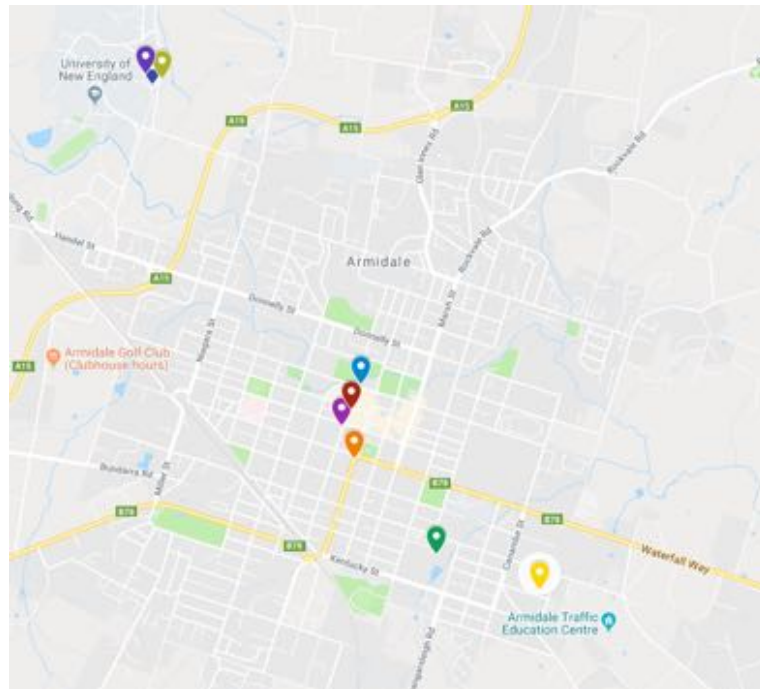
- Daily Rate - Minimum purchase is \$1/hr up to \$8.00 (buys 8 hours of parking time)
- 7 x Days - \$15.00 (fixed rate)

<https://www.une.edu.au/campus-life/campus-information/parking/visitors-and-intensive-school-parking>

UNE Contact - If at any time you need to contact a UNE staff member, Huw Nolan can be reached on +61267735666, leave a message, he will return your call.

Maps

Armidale is easy to get around. However, you can access a map with all of the key ASLEC-ANZ places [here](#).



<https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/viewer?hl=en&mid=1yeOePhGkIE69rcrdlhr-CX61ENFHBCT7&ll=-30.506977800799884%2C151.66290965000007&z=14>

Wednesday 13 th February 2019			
	Oorala	A2	A3
Cars leave at 9am	Complimentary car pool & bus transport to UNE. Meet @ <u>Goldfish Bowl</u> More details: https://www.facebook.com/events/242042266723605/		
9:30-10:15 am	Registration Morning tea, coffee & fruit provided Location: E11 Arts Building , Mac Lab (LG Level, outside A3) – This is also a work space / rest space room.		
10:15-10:45am	Welcome to Country, Uncle Colin Ahoy UNE Welcome (Professor Michael Whitmore, Dean of HASSE) Opening Housekeeping: Organising Team Location: Oorala		
10:45-11:45am	Plenary Panel: “Reclaiming Anaiwan: Our Story” Carolyn Briggs, Gabi Briggs and Callum Clayton-Dixon Location: Oorala Chair: Kate Wright		
11:45-12:15pm	Session 1 (Oorala): Encountering Aboriginal sovereignty and the agency of Country Chair: Emily O’Gorman Kate Wright (UNE) “Resurgent storytelling in colonial ecologies”	Session 2 (A2): Grounding story in a climate changing world Chair: Alanna Myers Alana West (UTS) “Hero technologies? A speculative technofeminist exploration of renewable energy transitions”	Session 3 (A3): Literary and cultural responses to environmental crisis Chair: Steve Harris Fiona Utley (UNE) “Trust and the Future”
12:15-12:45pm	Michael Adams (UOW) “Outlier”	Lili Pâquet (UNE) “The Walking Reader: Embodying Environmental Storyworlds through Ambient Literature”	Jessica White (UQ) “The water is rising around us’: Literary responses to climate change in Australia”
12:45-1:15pm	David Fonteyn (UNSW) “Melissa Lucashenko’s <i>Steam Pigs</i> as urban ecological allegory”	Renee Lulam (Jadavpur University) “Women Farmers and climate change in India”	Ian Collinson (Macquarie) “ <i>Singing along at the end of the world?</i> ”: popular music, ecological crisis and the problem of the Apocalypse

1:15-2:15pm	Lunch Location: E11 Arts Building, Ground Floor		
2:15-2:45pm	Session 1 (Ooralā): Telling different stories, making hidden worlds visible Chair: Michael Adams Jill Sorensen (Massey) “I don’t know if the water knows how it will make its way to the sea”	Session 2 (A2): Experiments in method Chair: Alexis Harley Lorina Baker (UNE) “Decolonial / Placemaking / Visual storytelling”	Session 3 (A3): Storying with nonhuman beings and concepts Chair: Anna Boswell Elinor Scarth and Leoni Mhari (Edinburgh) “We are sending a Scottish Landscape”
2:45-3:15pm	Sue Reid (USYD) “Space Junk topographies and the pole of inaccessibility”	Julie Collins (UNE) “Our Shared story: the role of art and ritual in promoting healing and reconciliation”	Grace Moore (Otago) “‘I know not of a spot more odious’: Anthony Trollope and the emotions of mining”
3:15-3:45pm	Louise Boscacci (UOW) Oolacunta and her kin linger in the gibber lands: Disrespecting Extinction”	Vanessa Bible (UNE) “Oral History as Methodology in Environmental Humanities”	Joanna Pope (Frei Universitat Berlin) “Autofiction and the impersonal”
3:45 – 4:15pm	Michael Chew (Monash) “Images of hope, images of change: participatory approaches to north-south climate solidarity”	Kim Satchell (SCU) “Life-worlding: Wayfinding the new ecology”	Kay Are (Melbourne) “Posthuman ‘Geo-metry’: Storying Conceptual Writing”
4:15pm - 4:45pm	Afternoon tea Location: E11 Arts Building, Ground Floor		
4:45-5:45pm	Keynote: Daniel Hikuroa Te Awaroa – Voice of the River Chair: Steve Harris Location: Ooralā		
5:45pm-6:15pm	Transport to Armidale Aboriginal Community Garden (free and abundant parking for those in cars)		
6:30pm -8:30pm	Exhibition: Surviving New England: Our Koori Matriarchs, Part One To honour and to celebrate the strong Blak Matriarchs who have raised our families and our community, artist Gabi Briggs presents the portrait exhibition, "Surviving New England: Our Koori Matriarchs, Part One" at the Armidale Aboriginal Community Garden. BBQ dinner provided 7.45pm and 8.15pm – A Return Bus Service to town from Aboriginal Community Garden to Armidale Post Office		

Thursday 14 th February 2019			
	Oorala	A2	A3
Cars leave at 8.30am	Complimentary car pool & bus transport to UNE. Meet @ Goldfish Bowl		
9:00-10:00am	Keynote: Alison Whittaker Holding Ground, Holding Patterns: Just what can we do with ‘being seen’ by settler law and literature? Chair: Alexis Harley Location: Oorala		
10:00-10:30am	Morning tea Location: E11, Ground Floor		
10:30 - 11am	Session 1 (Oorala): Figuring Time: Past, Present and Future Chair: Richard Jordan Jamie Wang (USYD) “Amnesia: Eradicating the past and active remembering”	Session 2 (A2): “Atomic gardening, writing as dying while living, within and without: Three fabulations for the Anthropocene.” Chair: Ballard, Lobb and McKinnon Su Ballard, Joshua Lobb and Catherine McKinnon (UOW)	Session 3 (A3): Creative Experiments #1 Chair: Jennifer Hamilton Julie Vulcan (WSU) “DARKBody: underground journeys and audio casting”
11:00-11:30am	Anna Boswell (Auckland) “Zoo-Mnemonics: Hologrammatic Marsupials and Extinction-on-Loop”	As above	Perdita Phillips (Artist) “I want to be effluent”
11:30-12:00pm	Julie Shearer (UNE) “Time and Tide”	As Above	Karen Kennedy (UNE) “Getting my politics on: Ipermie and the ontological turn”
12:00-1:00pm	Lunch (and @ 12.30: Optional Walk to some of UNE’s trees with Dr Tanya Howard) Location: E11, Ground Floor		
1:00 - 1.30pm	Session 1 (Oorala): Critical poetics Chair: Jennifer McDonell Valentina Gosetti & Daniel Finch-Race (UNE) “Ecoregionally Grounding Nineteenth-Century French Stories”.	Session 2 (A2): Creative Experiments #2 Chair: Julie Vulcan Sarah Edwards (Artist) The Growling Grass Frog and Its River Lethe: A sonic reflection on storytelling, memory and forgetting.	Session 3 (A3): Telling more-than-human stories Chair: Thom van Dooren Deborah Wardle (RMIT) “Storying with Groundwater: Evoking the Affects of Hyperobjects in Fiction”

1:30- 2:00pm	Katherine FitzHywel (Melbourne) “Extinction, Absence, and Erasure: Appropriation of, or holding space for, nonhuman animals in contemporary Australian Poetry”	Marty Branagan (UNE) “Locked On! The Seventh and Most Illegal in the Hitchhikers Guide Trilogy”	Susan Pyke (Melbourne) “Man Shy and Mother Bereft”
2:00pm – 2:30pm	Kate Middleton (UOW) “The Ghostly Poetics of the Ecological Imagination”	Ilka Blue Nelson (Latorica Studio) “Storytelling Beyond the Anthropocene”	Hannah Schurholz (LaTrobe) “‘L’Inconnue Ophelia: Re-stor(y)ing water, women and death in contemporary Australian Texts”
2:30pm-2:45pm	Short Refreshment/Toilet Break		
2:45pm – 3:15pm	Session 1 (Orala): Stories of Plants, Ground and Earth Chair: Hayley Singer Alexis Harley (LaTrobe) “The story underground: mycelial webs”	Session 2 (A2): Creative Experiments #3 Chair: Marty Branagan Anna-Katherina Laboissiere (Curtin University) Terraform: grounding and ungrounding in ex-situ conservation	N/A
3:15pm – 3:45pm	Emily O’Gorman (MAQ) “Weaving worlds: Postcolonial and multispecies politics of plants”	Elizabeth Shores (Independent) “Outer space as metaphor for possibility for practioners and viewers of Art and Design”	
3:45pm – 4:15pm	Kate Judith (UNSW) “Mangroves: On being a filter feeder”	Richard Jordan (UNE) “The Tiniest Thing”: A play reading	
4:15pm – 4:45pm	Transport to Armidale TreeGroup		
4:45pm- 6:30pm	Two Gardens Walkshop (incl. Afternoon tea and <i>100 Atmospheres</i> Readings, The Tree Group History, Anaiwan Language in place, and the Sustainable Living Armidale Community Garden at the old Tennis Courts, and a reading by Dr Ariella Van Luyn). Afternoon tea @ Armidale Tree Group Bus Available from Community Garden to town 6.30. Or a short walk.		
7:00pm	Conference Dinner @ Goldfish Bowl		

Friday 15 th February 2019		
	Oorala	
Cars leave at 8.15am	Car pool fest @ <u>Goldfish Bowl</u> for ASLEC-ANZ AGM	
8:30-9:30am	ASLEC-ANZ AGM	Complimentary car pool & bus transport to UNE (cars leave at 9am). Meet @ <u>Goldfish Bowl</u>
9:30- 11:00am	Keynote: Greta Gaard (by video conference) “(Un)Storyed Air, Breath, and Embodiment” Respondents: Ruth Morgan (Monash) and Hayley Singer (Melbourne) Chair: Jennifer Mae Hamilton Location: Oorala	
11:00am – 11:30am	Morning tea Location: Oorala Foyer	
11.30am – 12:30pm	Plenary Panel: “An Artist, Farmer, Scientist and a Planner Walk into A Bar...” – The Kandos School of Cultural Adaptation Laura Fisher, Gilbert Grace, Ian Millis, Glen Morris, Imogen Semmler, Leanne Thompson, Alex Wisser Chair: Laura Fisher Location: Oorala	
12:30 – 1:30pm	Keynote: Thom van Dooren Moving Birds in Hawai’i: Assisted Colonisation in a Colonised Land Chair: Huw Nolan Location: Oorala	
1:30-2:30pm	Lunch Location: Oorala Foyer Plumwood Mountain Launch (Oorala Lecture Theatre – 2.05pm)	
2:30 – 3:30pm	Plenary Roundtable: Remembering Deborah Bird Rose Michael Adams, Thom van Dooren, Jennifer Mae Hamilton, Emily O’Gorman, Kim Satchell, Kate Wright Chair: Grace Moore Location: Oorala	
3:30- 4:00pm	Closing Gathering, Remarks, Next Steps Location: Oorala	
4:00pm	Airport Transfer Time (for those leaving on last Friday flight) / town transport for those staying (we are unable to provide/arrange airport transfers, but there is enough time to make the final flight, but of course, we recommend you stay for the closing event!!)	
Cinema Bus Transfer: 4.45pm	Free / final bus transfer from UNE to Belgrave Twin.	
5:30pm-6:30pm	Screening/ Film: <i>Terror Nullius</i> by soda_jerk at the Belgrave Twin Cinema – (Conference Close) https://www.sodajerker.com.au/video_work.php?v=20180223211319	
From 6:30pm...	DIY Friday Evening	

Art Exhibitions and Installations
Continuous Throughout Conference.

Details of Sorensen, Thomson and Scarth & Mhari in the Alphabetised Abstracts Below

Jill Sorensen – *I don't know if the water knows how it will make its way to the sea.*

Location: A1 Theatre, E11

Leanne Thomson – *The Terrain of Belonging*

Location: E11, general space between Lower ground and Ground level

Elinor Scarth & Leonie Mhari – *We are sending a Scottish Landscape*

Location: E11, General Space, Ground Floor

The Art of Agriculture – Australasian Society for Classical Studies (ASCS) Exhibition

In celebration of the local changeover from stone fruit to apple season, this exhibition is a collaboration with local farm Greenhill Orchards, featuring photographs and produce. It is inspired by Ancient Roman agricultural celebrations and the festive art of 'bucrania' (festive garlands). From February 4-7 2019, UNE Hosted the 40th Annual ASCS Conference, accompanied by the exhibition, *The Art of Agriculture: An Exhibition in 2 & 3D*. Given striking crossover with the themes of our conference, we were delighted that they were leaving it up to coincide with Grounding Story, with thanks to Dr Bronwyn Hopwood.

Location: Arts Building E11, General Space Ground and Lower Ground

Reading at the Armidale Community Garden: "A Scree of Lantana." 2018. *Island* 152 <https://islandmag.com/shop/island-152>

Ariella Van Luyn is a lecturer in writing at the University of New England. She is author of a novel, *Treading Air*, and several short stories. Her research interests include historical fiction, practice-led research, oral histories and community narratives.

Keynote Speaker Abstracts and Bios:

Reclaiming Anaiwan: Our Story.

Carolyn Briggs, Gabi Briggs and Callum Clayton-Dixon
13th February, 10:45- 11:45, Oorala

A few years ago, if you were to google 'Anaiwan language', not much would come up in your search results apart from a Wikipedia entry stating that the language was extinct. But now you can attend classes run by the Anaiwan Language Revival Program at which children and adults alike are learning to speak their ancestral tongue. These classes are being developed and taught by our people, for our people, and based upon painstaking research that we are undertaking ourselves. Language revival has quickly become a conduit for the reclamation of Anaiwan culture and history more broadly. It has been largely through archival research that we have been able to begin reawakening elements of our ancient yet living Anaiwan story that were forced into dormancy so long ago. In setting out to revive Anaiwan, it has been critical to co-opt the colonial archive and subvert the colonial narrative, dissecting their story, to uncover our truth, our story.

Panel members Gabi Briggs, Carolyn Briggs and Callum Clayton-Dixon are core members of the Anaiwan Language Revival Program first formed in April 2016. The Program, tasked with driving an autonomous community-based Anaiwan language revitalization effort, aims to repatriate our ancient tongue to its original place within community, culture, and country.

Te Awaroa – Voice of the River

Daniel Hikuroa

University of Auckland, New Zealand

13th February, 4:45- 5:45, Oorala

In a Māori worldview we exist in a kinship-based-relationship with Te Taiao – the Earth, Universe and everything within it. What is described as ‘the universe’ in scientific theory is conceptualised in mātauranga Māori (Māori knowledge) as ‘process’, constructed around a whakapapa or kinship framework. Thus kinship as practical ontology lies at the very core of Māori thinking, knowledge, identity and practice. What role could such thinking, knowing and being play in contemporary issues facing Oceania?

Across New Zealand, many rivers are no longer safe for fishing and swimming, and Kiwis are seriously concerned about declining river health. The ‘bottom line’ regulatory approach of the government's freshwater reforms is anthropocentrically framed, and we argue, flawed. Inspired by and drawing from mātauranga Māori, Te Awaroa is a national movement of Kiwis taking action to care for their waterways. A critical strand of this effort is to reframe the issue from the perspective of the river – what would the river say? What is it saying? We seek to articulate and then empower the voice of the river, and anticipate our findings could make contributions to issues worldwide where similar kinship-based relationships with the land and sea exist.

Dr Dan Hikuroa

Ngāti Maniapoto, Waikato-Tainui

Senior Lecturer, Māori Studies, Te Wananga o Waipapa, University of Auckland

Dan is an Earth System Scientist and established world expert on weaving indigenous knowledge and science to realise the dreams and aspirations of the communities he works with. He has undertaken many projects including co-writing the 2014 State of the Hauraki Gulf Environment Report, geothermal development feasibilities, planning river and catchment restorations, co-writing iwi environmental management plans, Independent Review Panel member of Sea-Change Tai Timu Tai Pari marine spatial planning for the Hauraki Gulf, hazard and vulnerability assessments and industrial waste-site rehabilitation.

From 2011 to 2016 he was the Research Director at Ngā Pae o te Māramatanga, New Zealand's Māori Centre of Research Excellence, and is currently a member of Ngā Kaihautū Tikanga Taiao, Watercare & Pāmu ERG, Water Directorate STAG and Pūniu River Care Board. Dan has been spearheading alternative ways of assessing sustainability, including weaving indigenous knowledge and epistemologies into legislation, assessment frameworks and decision-support tools.

Holding Ground, Holding Patterns: Just what can we do with ‘being seen’ by settler law and literature?

Alison Whittaker

University of Tasmania, TAS, Australia

14th February, 9:00- 10:00, Oorala

Indigenous peoples on this continent have long sustained a practice of sharing Story within their nations and between others to help us know ourselves, each other and Country. Woven to this practice, Indigenous writers in the last two hundred years have come to work with printed English-language literature as a means to advocate for ourselves, our Country, and our mob. At the same time, we have worked in Western courts and law to make injustice visible using the storytelling traditions of their criminal or civil jurisdictions — like sentencing law, native title, Royal Commissions and Coroners Courts. Both are part of a pluralistic way of seeking justice by restraining the colonial conscience and mitigating the harms of colonisation. We hold ground with Story.

While accepting that the approach only works if it supplements a broader strategy of asserting, rather than just defending, Sovereignty — just what do Indigenous people get from ‘being seen’ in law and literature? Are there other options — within literary and legal storytelling — where we can refuse to be the subject of inquiry and still get the risk mitigation that we want for our people and our land? Should we aim for something else entirely? Alison Whittaker yarns over the strategies of representation and counter-representation, analysing key Indigenous literary and legal movements and reflecting on her own work as an author and legal practitioner.

Alison Whittaker is a Gomeroi poet and legal academic from Gunnedah and Tamworth. She is a Research Fellow at the Jumbunna Institute. Between 2017-2018, Alison was a Fulbright scholar at Harvard Law School, where she was awarded Dean’s Scholar in Race, Gender and Criminal Law. Her second book, *BLAKWORK*, was released with Magabala Books in September 2018.

(Un)Storied Air, Breath, and Embodiment

(Presenting via video conference; with Hayley Singer and Ruth Morgan as respondents on the ground)

Greta Gaard

University of Wisconsin-River Falls, USA

15th February, 9:30- 11:00, Oorala

ABSTRACT

"(Un)Storied Air, Breath, and Embodiment" ventures toward an ecocritical feminist approach to air, developing an embodied ecofeminist methodology and collaborating with Chia-ju Chang in advancing *smog cultural studies* as an area for ecocritical inquiry. The talk offers opportunities to practice breath awareness amid diverse explorations of our personal and cultural *airstories*, air and smog science, smog/mind-body intra-actions, gendered responses to smog, root causes of our smoggy materialities, and our *air-real* transcorporeality.

Greta Gaard is Professor of English and Founding Coordinator of the Sustainability Faculty Fellows at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. Her work emerges from the intersections of antiracist feminisms, environmental justice, queer ecologies and critical animal studies, exploring a wide range of issues, from postcolonial ecofeminism to children's environmental literature, and the ecopolitics of climate change. Gaard has served on the Executive Council for the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment (ASLE), and on the editorial board for the organization's journal, *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment (ISLE)* since its inception. Author or editor of six books of ecocriticism and feminist praxis, Gaard anchors her most recent volume, *Critical Ecofeminism* (2017), in Val Plumwood's foundational work. Her current research advances conversations across the fields of critical ecofeminism and climate justice, Buddhist philosophy, mindfulness, and the environmental humanities.

Ruth Morgan is a Senior Research Fellow in the History Program at Monash University. She has published widely on the climate and water histories of Australia and the British Empire, including her award-winning book, *Running Out? Water in Western Australia* (2015). Her current project, on environmental exchanges between British India and the Australian colonies, has been generously supported by the Australian Research Council (DECRA) and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. She is also a co-investigator on the ARC Discovery Project, "Water and the Making of Urban Australia" and a Lead Author in Working Group II of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's Assessment Report 6.

Hayley Singer earned her PhD in Creative Writing at the University of Melbourne. Her research and writing practice traverse the fields of creative writing, ecofeminism and animal studies. She is a Research Associate of the Melbourne node of the ARC Centre of Excellence for the History of Emotions and a member of the Australasian Animal Studies Association. Her first book, *The Fleischgeist: a haunting*, is due to be published by The Animal Publics Series of Sydney University Press in 2019.

“An Artist, Farmer, Scientist and a Planner Walk into A Bar...”

Kandos School of Cultural Adaptation

15th Feb, 11.30am-12.30pm, Oorala

The Kandos School of Cultural Adaptation was formed as an art cooperative in 2016 to support projects that aim to achieve cultural change in the world. As an entity that has its origins in a fictional depiction of Kandos’ post-industrial evolution, KSCA (www.ksca.land) has an interesting relationship to storytelling. First, our projects are all socially engaged and involve sharing knowledge and exploring new lines of communication between people who don’t normally interact. Second, one of our priorities is to highlight the cultural importance of supposedly non-cultural phenomena (such as farming methods or transport infrastructure). And third, we regularly engage in speculative ‘world building’ as a means of enacting the ethos of cultural adaptation that distinguishes KSCA’s approach to creative work. As a part of all of this, we blog, publish, workshop and perform stories all the time.

This roundtable will bring together four members of KSCA (Leanne Thompson, Alex Wisser, Ian Millis and Laura Fisher). Our roundtable will include artist/ecologist Imogen Semmler and organic farmer Glenn Morris, both collaborators on KSCA’s 2018-19 project ‘An artist, a farmer and a scientist walk into a bar...’ who are based in Armidale and Inverell respectively. We will address three topics from the perspective of our individual experiences:

- The role of narrative in the artist’s association with community. What is the relationship of a community to its common story? Who tells this story and how is it told? How does it maintain its continuity and how does it change? What can an artist bring to this story that isn’t already there?
- The relationship between fictionalisation and social transformation. We will discuss how story can allow us to model new worlds within the existing world, rather than wait for a moment in the future when a larger movement of desired change might occur.
- The challenge of engaging the public in modes of storytelling that honour the complexity of the artist-farmer collaborations we are involved with. What kinds of narratives can encompass the personal, social and environmental transitions that unfold through practices of repair and restoration in the landscape?

Laura Fisher is an artist and sociologist. Over the last ten years she has pursued projects around socially engaged art in rural contexts, urban cycling culture in Sydney, cross-cultural encounter in the global art world, and Australian Indigenous art. Laura has a keen interest in the role art can play in bridging differences and fostering cooperation, particularly when it concerns society’s changing relationship to land. In 2016 she convened and co-organised *Futurelands2*, a weekend forum staged in Kandos. She was recently a post-doctoral fellow at Sydney College of the Arts (2016-18), which enabled her to research artists who are engaging with farming innovation, land ethics and rural regeneration in Australia, Japan, Sweden and Russia.

Gilbert Grace is a multi-disciplinary artist, curator and researcher. He has a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) from RMIT and a Masters of Fine Art from Sydney College of the Arts. Gilbert's current practice traverses urban ecology and mobility, Sydney's Indigenous history, models of self-sufficiency and retro-innovation, the science of clean energy, and his family's farming heritage in NSW. In recent years these concerns have found expression through painting, video, mapping and a range of socially engaged activities associated with urban cycling. Gilbert co-founded ARTcycle in 2010 and has led hundreds of inclusive rides that introduce the public to features of Sydney's Indigenous, colonial and industrial history. In 2016 Gilbert led the KSCA project 'The Hemp Initiative'.

Ian Milliss began exhibiting in 1967 as the youngest member of the Central Street Gallery group and one of Australia's first conceptual artists. From 1971 he developed a practice based on cultural activism working with community and political groups, arguing that the artist's role is the adaptation and innovation of cultural memes rather than content production for the art market. He has worked in the Green Bans, prison reform and trade union movements and has dealt with a wide range of cultural issues including workers and artists rights, sustainable farming, heritage and conservation, and climate change.

Glenn Morris is an organic cattle farmer based in Inverell, Northern NSW. Since completing a Masters in Sustainable Agriculture through The University of Sydney in 2005, Morris has dedicated himself to researching and practising advanced land stewardship models. Glenn won the 2014 State Landcare award for Innovation in Sustainable Farm Practices and recently received Highly Commended at the National Landcare awards in this category. Since 1998, Morris has been the farm manager for [FigTrees Organic Farms](#), which is highly regarded as one of the premium organic ethical brands on the market. Morris is an active member of [Farmers for Climate Change Action](#).

Imogen Semmler is an artist/scientist who has recently completed a degree in Ecology at the University of New England. She is passionate about the science of ecological agriculture with a focus on soil and landscape ecology. Her programming and producing work has spanned festivals, theatre, public art, panels, conferences and interdisciplinary art projects. Imogen was founding Artistic Director of Underbelly Arts, an event for emerging and experimental artists in Sydney. She has also worked with a range of arts and media organisations including Sydney Festival, Melbourne Comedy Festival, Creative Sydney, the Australian International Documentary Conference, Art and About, Fbi Radio, The Great Escape Festival and the Indigenous Remote Communications Association.

Leanne Thompson is a Master of Fine Arts candidate at UNSW Art + Design working in the field of sculpture and public art. For many years she has been a director and designer of a company specialising in bespoke metalwork and sub-sea engineering, while maintaining a studio practice that has seen her work feature in more than 70 exhibitions. In the last few years she has moved towards a practice aimed at enhancing collaboration and community engagement often outside of conventional art spaces. Her recent projects are inspired by concern for the environment and the nexus between communicating scientific data and the visual arts, and aim to render intelligible the interdependent relationship between humanity and ecology. These projects include 'Living Data' (in conjunction with Climate Change Cluster at UTS, Sydney) and 'Biodiversity Dreaming' (with Greening Bathurst, Charles Sturt University and local Wiradyuri, scientists, farmers and environmentalists).

Alex Wisser is an artist and creative producer. After completing Honours at the National Art School, Alex founded and acted as co-director at a number of art spaces and initiatives in

Sydney. In 2013, he co-founded Cementa Contemporary Arts Festival in Kandos NSW, a festival that engages artists with the social, environmental, and cultural context of the small town that hosts it. Alex's individual arts practice has recently developed through large scale, long term projects like Cementa and KSCA into a cross disciplinary, community engaged practice exploring the potential of art to participate in everyday cultural contexts, especially the regional context in which he lives and works.

Moving Birds in Hawai'i

Assisted colonisation in a colonised land

Thom van Dooren

University of Sydney, NSW, Australia

In September 2011, a delicate cargo of 24 Nihoa Millerbirds was carefully loaded by conservationists onto a ship for a three-day voyage to Laysan Island in the remote Northwest Hawaiian Islands. The goal of this translocation was to establish a second population of this endangered species, an “insurance population” in the face of the mounting pressures of climate change and potential new biotic arrivals. But the millerbird, or ulūlu in Hawaiian, is just one of the many avian species to become the subject of this kind of “assisted colonisation.” In Hawai'i, and around the world, recent years have seen a broad range of efforts to safeguard species by finding them homes in new places. Thinking through the ulūlu project, this lecture explores the challenges and possibilities of assisted colonisation in a colonised land. What does it mean to move birds in the context of the long, and ongoing, history of dispossession of the Kānaka Maoli, the Native Hawaiian people? How are distinct but entangled process of colonisation, of *unworlding*, at work in the lives of both people and birds? Ultimately, this article explores how these diverse colonisations might be understood and told *responsibly* in an era of escalating loss and extinction.

Thom van Dooren is Associate Professor and Australian Research Council Future Fellow (2017-2021) in the Department of Gender and Cultural Studies at the University of Sydney, and founding co-editor of the journal *Environmental Humanities* (Duke University Press). His research and writing focus on some of the many philosophical, ethical, cultural, and political issues that arise in the context of species extinctions and human entanglements with threatened species and places. He is the author of *Flight Ways: Life and Loss at the Edge of Extinction* (2014), *The Wake of Crows: Living and Dying in Shared Worlds* (2019), and co-editor with Deborah Bird Rose and Matthew Chrulew of *Extinction Studies: Stories of Time, Death, and Generations* (2017), all published by Columbia University Press. www.thomvandooren.org

Abstracts (presented in alphabetical order by author surname)

OUTLIER

Adams, Michael

University of Wollongong, NSW, Australia

13th Feb, 12:15-12:45, Oorala

In this reading I attempt to bring together my experience and knowledge of wild places, both remote and nearby; my learning from multiple decades with Indigenous and local communities; and my attempts at understanding a reality beyond rational explanation, through my lived, embodied, emotional experiences. How do concepts like the agency of place, a commonplace consideration for many Indigenous societies, connect to our rational understandings of the world? These elements are examined and presented through the perspective of the outlier: a person on the margins, uncomfortable almost everywhere, never quite at home. There are a set of complementarities and paradoxes around uncertainty and intensity, danger and freedom, strength and marginality, loss and love.

Michael Adams writes about humans and nature. His work has been published in *Meanjin*, *Australian Book Review*, *The Guardian*, *Mascara Literary Review* and academic journals and books. He has travelled and worked extensively with Indigenous and other local communities, and teaches in Human Geography at the University of Wollongong. His essay 'Salt Blood' won the 2017 Calibre Essay Prize.

Posthuman 'Geo-metry': Storying Conceptual Writing

Are, Kay

University of Melbourne

13th Feb, 3:45- 4:15, A2

This paper diffracts the dying light of conceptual writing through Vicki Kirby's (2011) posthumanist proposal that writing be considered a kind of 'geo-metry': that is, an activity in which the Earth instrumentalises the human writer to 'take measure' of and articulate itself. The notion, I suggest, is generatively read alongside Iovino and Oppermann's (2013) discussion of 'storied matter' and in view of insights from the field of biosemiotics.

The point would be to establish grounds for an alternative genealogy for conceptual poetics, one that is not predicated on the devaluation of matter. The dominant discourse locates conceptualism's value in the way it reveals and revels in text's status as an endlessly manufacturable, abundantly available and inert material. But, along with others (e.g. Leung 2018), I contest this framework. I argue that it is a mischaracterisation that fails to challenge persistent mind-vs-matter tropes, and that occludes those conceptualist works whose radical invention and political potential lie precisely in their attentiveness to language's dynamic, material, even agential nature, and to the embodied nature of the writer's entanglement with it. This is a strand of experimental literature worth rescuing from its relegation to the (supposedly receding) conceptualist wave – especially since its poetics has something to teach us about writing as a robustly posthuman activity. To support my stance, this paper looks at a few examples of multimodal poetic works that, in recording the material and extra-human conditions of writing's production, exhibit a kind of 'aesthetics of aftermath' (Rugoff) that can underscore Kirby's thesis.

Dr Kay Are is a writer and academic with research interests in multimodal poetry and fiction; experimental writing processes and experimental translation; writing pedagogy; and posthumanist,

feminist and materialist approaches to all the above. Collaborations and discussion welcome:
kayr@unimelb.edu.au

Atomic gardening, writing as dying while living, within and without: Three fabulations for the Anthropocene.

Ballard, Susan, Joshua Lobb and Catherine McKinnon

University of Wollongong, NSW, Australia

14th Feb, 10:30- 12:00, A2

We cannot deny extreme weather events, air contamination and waste, nor the rapid loss of the planet's biodiversity. Yet somehow, as a species, we are failing to act. This panel investigates how collaborative writing practices might encourage transformative engagements with the Anthropocene. To borrow from Isabelle Stengers (2005), the particular 'occasion' that surrounds a practice is important. In this sequence of three interconnected papers, we advocate for a creative and critical mode of writing that includes multiple perspectives (including those hidden or disavowed) in order to challenge stable illusions about our planet.

As a starting point and as a metaphor for our project, we use the unstable image of 'atomic gardening' —part of a strategy of the Atoms for Peace movement in the 1950s to reimagine nuclear fission post-Hiroshima. It is a vision that contains within it fear and care, mutation and metamorphosis, destruction and control, monstrous life and regenerative death. Each panellist steps off from the image but brings to it a different critical and creative approach. As part of our collaborative practice, we weave these perspectives together: they provoke and stimulate, combine with and unravel from each other. Through this process, we consider the ways we might use writing to face our own death (singular and planetary) in order to live. We model a collaborative writing practice that allows a care for multiple perspectives and gives attention to what 'is and is not' within and without. In a time when urgent change is needed to the way we live, a discussion about how writing might also change is just as imperative.

Dr Susan Ballard is the co-director of the Centre for Critical Creative Research at the University of Wollongong, Australia. Her research is concerned with the ways in which art and writing address big ideas about the environment, technology, and the politics of culture. Recent essays are in *Reading Room*, *Environmental Humanities*, and *Art and Australia*. She is the co-author of *100 Atmospheres: Studies in Scale and Wonder* (Open Humanities Press, 2018), and her co-authored monograph *Alliances in the Anthropocene: Humans, Plants, and Fire* will be out with Palgrave Pivot in 2019. <http://suballard.net.nz>

Dr Joshua Lobb is Senior Lecturer in creative writing at the University of Wollongong. His stories have appeared in *The Bridport Anthology*, *Best Australian Stories*, *Animal Studies*, *Text* and *Southerly*. His 'novel in stories' about grief and climate change, *The Flight of Birds*, will be released by Sydney University Press in January 2019. He is also part of the multi-authored project, *100 Atmospheres: Studies in Scale and Wonder* (Open Humanities Press, 2018).

Dr Catherine McKinnon's most recent novel *Storyland* was published by Harper Collins in 2017 and short-listed for the Miles Franklin Award 2018 and voted one of the 5 most popular books in 2017 on Jennifer Byrne's ABC Bookclub. She is one of the authors of *100 Atmospheres: Studies in Scale and Wonder*. Catherine teaches creative writing and performance at the University of Wollongong.

Decolonial / Placewriting / Visual storytelling

Barker, Lorina

University of New England, NSW, Australia

13th Feb, 2:15-2:45, A2

The clouded lens of “the colonial gaze” deemed the Australian landscape an empty wilderness needing to be subdued, toiled and ‘civilised’. This Eurocentric lens removed Aboriginal people from the landscape and ignored a millennia-long knowledge system that intrinsically interconnects people with Country through kinship. By reframing and recontextualising ethnographic images and language this discussion ruptures the concept of the wilderness and restores the symbiotic human relationship with place and nature, in particular it recognises place agency and sentience and acknowledges the legacy and trauma of removal from Country.

Dr Lorina Barker is a descendant of the Wangkumara and Muruwari people from northwest NSW, Adnyamathanha (Flinders Rangers SA), the Kooma and Kunja (southwest QLD), and the Kurnu-Baarkandji (northwest NSW). Lorina is an oral historian and filmmaker who teaches modern Australian history, Oral history and Local and Community History. Lorina uses multimedia as part of her multimedia projects to transfer knowledge, history, stories and culture to the next generations in mediums that they use and are familiar with, such as film, short stories, poetry and music. She wrote and directed the short film documentary, *Tibooburra: My Grandmother’s Country*.

War & Peace: The Vietnam War and Environmentalism in Australia

Bible, Vanessa

University of New England, NSW, Australia

13th Feb, 3:15-3:45, A2

While the Civil Rights movement marked the start of the ‘radicalisation’ of American society, the Vietnam War was a major catalyst for dissent in Australia, and it was the war that for many created an awareness of environmental destruction. The Vietnam War moratoria of 1970 were the largest mass demonstrations in Australia’s history, and Australian environmental activists frequently cite the antiwar protests as the event that set them on their activist path. This paper will explore the links between the antiwar movement and the environment movement in Australia by drawing on oral history interviews with environmental activists. Citing ‘justice’, ‘struggle’, ‘people power’, ‘immersion’, and ‘radicalisation’, the Vietnam moratoria were a defining event in Australia’s history, creating an awareness that thoughtful, committed citizens really can change the world – and despite the direct, cultural, and ecological violence of the Vietnam war, the power of the movement against it would ultimately inspire people to work towards environmental peace.

Dr Vanessa Bible lectures in Peace Studies and History in the School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences at the University of New England. My research interests lie within the environmental humanities and include Anthropocene dialogues, environmental peace, environmental advocacy and Australian environmental history, with a specific focus on counterculture and activism. My most recent publication is *Terania Creek and the Forging of Modern Environmental Activism*, released in January 2018. I am working on a number of other projects, including a book titled *Environmental Peace in the Anthropocene*, to be published by Routledge in 2019.

Oolacunta and her kin linger in the gibber lands: Disrespecting Extinction

Boscacci, Louise

University of Wollongong

13th Feb, 3:15-3.45, Oorala

Close your eyes. Listen. A northeasterly is stirring the needles of the desert oaks. They whirr. They whistle a memory of the once-upon-a-time Eromanga Sea. The sun up for an hour now is gathering to midsummer. The stone gibbers of the long flat ahead shimmer in the rising heat. Up on the dune crest, Oolacunta is tucked low in her grass scrape. Her joey is asleep, pouched, oblivious. She can smell the horses and men. New unfamiliar animals are in her country. What do they want?

This paper presents a *more-than-human ecobiography* from the restorying extinction project, *Thirty Living Ecobiographies for Thirty Extinct Mammals*. Here, I wit(h)ness and recompose the life and death herstory of the Desert Rat-kangaroo, Oolacunta, a tiny Australian marsupial extirpated in the mid twentieth century. I use words, gatherings from photographic and material archives, and living sound. I propose ecobiography as an aesthetic form *and* generative process in critical affective response to the little-known crisis of austral mammal extinctions well documented by concerned scientists over the past forty years. Another tranche of co-mammals with precarious futures increasingly entangled with climate change as much as the undone legacy of white settler colonialism is named on the threatened species list. I wonder: If all time is *now-time* (Patricia Grace), what can a feminist intersectional and transdisciplinary approach bring to these deep troubles that refuse normalisation as the cost of cultural business-as-usual? Might it now be time to positively disrespect an inherited language of extinction?

Zoo-Mnemonics: Hologrammatic Marsupials and Extinction-on-Loop

Boswell, Anna

University of Auckland, New Zealand

14th Feb, 11:00- 11:30, Oorala

The Tasmanian tiger or wolf (*Thylacinus cynocephalus*), the largest marsupial carnivore of modern times, is renowned for having entered extinction on 7 September 1936 within the walls of Hobart Zoo in Tasmania. In hauntingly banal footage which circulates on YouTube, the hologrammatic “endling” or last known specimen yawns, stretches, wags his tail, paces the perimeter of his enclosure, scratches himself, lies down and gnaws at a bone. The fate of this animal casts shadow over the Tasmanian devil (*Sarcophilus harrisii*), whose future is imperilled by a facial tumour disease spreading rapidly through remnant populations, and whose uncertain survival will depend on the ongoing interventions of zoos and sanctuaries. The strikingly-patterned stories of these two species raise questions about the workings of captivity, memory and “death worlding” (Rose 2011, 12) in settler colonial places. Indeed, the “common” names bestowed on these animals by settler culture (wolf, tiger, devil) encode the memory of their capture, reminding of how an indigenous lifeworld has been appropriated and over-written by a European one. As this suggests, the Tasmanian devil—like the Tasmanian tiger before it—recalls traumatic processes of settlement and erasure which have changed the face of southern-world landscapes. These species also recall the spread of settler dis-ease in the face of endemic creatures who animate the persistent memory of an already-inhabited place. This paper reviews the motion picture footage and visits taxidermied specimens of the Tasmanian tiger in the Natural History Museum in Vienna and in Melbourne Museum. It also encounters living exhibits in the “Tasmanian Devil Unzoo” near the remains of the penal colony at Port Arthur. In so doing, it considers how zoo-mnemonic infrastructures work to capture, clone and efface these animals and their endling memory. What such infrastructures disclose, the paper argues, is not the possibility of forestalling the fate of one species by remembering the other, or salvaging one in order to de-extinctify the other. Rather, they suggest it is a matter of understanding how settler colonialism animates and is in turn re-animated by living death and extinction-on-loop.

Anna Boswell is a lecturer in Humanities at the University of Auckland. She talks and writes about environmental issues in terms of public pedagogy and settler colonialism, and has been awarded a Marsden Fund Fast-Start grant (2016-19) by the Royal Society of New Zealand for a project investigating the history of zoos and wildlife sanctuaries in the settler south. Her most recent work has been published by *Animal Studies Journal*, the *Journal of New Zealand Studies* and the MLA, and her commissioned chapter on 'Australasia and Oceania' for the *Handbook of Historical Animal Studies* (Berlin: De Gruyter) is forthcoming in 2019.

Locked On! The Seventh and Most Illegal in the Hitchhiker's Guide Trilogy

Branagan, Marty

University of New England, NSW, Australia

14th Feb, 1:30- 2:00, Oorala

This ten minute PowerPoint presentation discusses a humorous eco-sci-fi novel grounded in real-life events, places and issues within Australian environmental activism. The novel is loosely based on direct action blockades at Maules Creek (aka Leard Forest), Bentley, Bulga, Emerald Beach, the Pilliga, AIDEX, Jabiluka and Roxby Downs, over concerns about coal, coal seam gas and uranium mining. It aims to bring a veracity to the narrative - absent from other direct action novels such as Derek Hansen's 1998 'Blockade' - a veracity such as that exemplified by Helen Garner's highly-engaging 'Monkey Grip', a novel based on her diaries. Utilising the author's experiences as a participant-observer at blockades, the illustrated novel aims to expound on nonviolence, environmental and social justice tropes in a more accessible fashion than traditional academic publications, and aims for a glimmer of hope amongst widespread pessimism over our environmental future and our democracy deficit. The talk also explores the emotional dimensions of writing about deeply-personal and sometimes traumatic events such as civil disobedience, and discusses difficulties surrounding the writing of fan fiction, such as chronic uncertainty over finding a publisher, and what legal and financial risks are involved in publication.

Marty Branagan is a parent, academic and activist who has been researching environmental, peace and social justice movements as a participant-observer since the Franklin River blockade in 1983. In particular, he focusses on nonviolence developments, including artistic activism and creating cultures of peace. He also examines nonviolence against ruthless opponents, and the evolution of the Tintin comic series.

Images of hope, images of change: participatory approaches to north-south climate solidarity

Chew, Michael

Monash University, Vic, Australia

13th Feb, 3:45- 4:15, A3

Environmental advocacy photography has tended to rely on simplified and polarised emotions of either *fear* in polarised images of despoiled landscapes or *hope* in the form of pristine wilderness, both reproducing nature/culture divides which are becoming increasingly untenable in the anthropocene era. Participatory visual methods have the potential to generate images and social relations which open up deeper engagement with the complexities of nature-culture relations. Furthermore, the shift of image authorship from the privileged outsider to the communities facing environmental hazards themselves gives opportunity for self-representations of hope. Caution must be taken as these methods have substantive ethical, methodological, and practical complexities. The presentation will draw upon images and methods from the doctoral action-research project *Climate Resilience Media Exchange*, which explores mutual learning, human-nature relations, and climate justice in the context of participatory visual dialogue between urban communities in

Bangladesh, Australia and China who are responding to climate and environmental hazards.

Our Shared story; the role of art and ritual in promoting healing and reconciliation

Collins, Julie

University of New England, NSW, Australia

13th Feb, 2:45-3:15, A2

Myall Creek is a place, with a horrendous story; a 'deathscape' of colonial violence, iconic of the killing fields of frontier conflict in Australia. The annual commemoration at the Myall Creek massacre site acknowledging this dark past, has, however, become the beginning of a new healing narrative of place. Each year the annual ceremony commemorates the massacre of 28 Indigenous Australians, and also the fact that at that time there were non-indigenous people prepared to bring the perpetrators to justice, culminating in the hanging of 7 non-indigenous men. Each year the ceremony recreates the communal memory of the past, but creates new and significant communal memories of participation in a reconciliatory event in the present. This reflects a desire by both Indigenous and non-indigenous peoples for cross-cultural exchanges that are both reconciliatory and decolonizing. This paper explores the transformational power of immersive place-based experience to create rich ritual, and a new, shared story of place. On the 180th anniversary of the massacre on 10 June, 2018, an embodiment of this experience of healing, was enacted through Aboriginal artist, Judy Watson's art installation 'The Witness Trees'; many women, including non-indigenous academic, Julie Collins, participated in wrapping 28 trees with white muslin around the memorial site; through art creating a deeply evocative representation of the story of place; the telling of stories through art is especially important in enhancing our capacity to feel empathy for the experiences of others.

Julie Collins is an academic at the University of New England, working primarily in the areas of Indigenous studies and education. She has been attending the Myall Creek annual memorial ceremony since 2000 and has published on the significance of this event for reconciliation between Indigenous and non-indigenous Australians; her research interests include exploring the power of immersive experiences to promote empathy, transformation, healing and reconciliation. In 2016, Julie worked with eco-scenographer Tanja Beer and local High Schools to create an immersive ecodrama at the Black Gully Music Festival. Julie has also recently worked with Lorina Barker to produce *Trucked Off*, a theatre event, performed at the opening of Lorina's exhibition 'Looking through windows', in Armidale, 2017, Brewarrina and Sydney in 2018.

'Singing along at the end of the world?': popular music, ecological crisis and the problem of the Apocalypse

Collinson, Ian

Macquarie University, NSW, Australia

13th Feb, 12:45-1:15, A3

According to pioneering ecocritic Laurence Buell (1993), the trope of the apocalypse has constituted the most powerful weapon in environmentalism's rhetorical armoury. Popular music's response to the challenges of climate change are frequently grounded in such apocalyptic rhetoric, as environmentally committed musicians and bands intervene in the public debate about ecological crises. Apocalyptic visions can be found in folk, rock, pop, indie and even jazz (Ingram 2010). However, such apocalyptic warnings might be inappropriate, ineffective or even counter-productive (Hulme 2007, Estok 2017:6). If substantive change is their aim might environmentally conscious musicians need to anchor their stories in different narratives, discourses and tropes? Moreover, is mass-mediated popular music even capable of producing alternative stories that might ground our knowledge about environmental issues broadly? This paper will critically examine the apocalypse trope as it is manifest in contemporary popular music, before then looking at possible musical alternatives to these familiar 'End Times' narratives that feature in many forms of ecomedias.

Dr Ian Collinson is a lecturer in media, cultural studies and environmental humanities in the Department of Media, Music, Communication and Cultural Studies at Macquarie University, Sydney, Australia. His research interests coalesce around ecomedia, especially popular music, and he convenes both the third-year capstone unit of the recently established environmental humanities major ('Cultures-Natures') and the Department's 'Arresting Ecologies' research cluster. Ian has recently been appointed co-director of Macquarie University's Environmental Humanities Research Stream. Ian has been a member of International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM-ANZ chapter) since 2005 and is currently a member of both ASLE-US and ASLEC.

The Growling Grass Frog and its River Lethe: A sonic reflection on storytelling, memory and forgetting

Edwards, Sarah

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

14th Feb, 1:00- 1:30, A2

Lethe, the River of Oblivion, rolls
Her wat'ry labyrinth, wherof who drinks
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain
Milton, *Paradise Lost* (2.577-86)

In *Paradise Lost*, Milton's River of Oblivion promotes the blessing of forgetting: that the pain and joy of human emotion is gently erased by drinking from the slow, meandering Lethe. Milton's ancient Greek reference to the mythological goddess of forgetting provided a touchstone from which to construct a contemporary myth whose protagonist – the locally extinct Growling Grass Frog – had taken up residence in River Lethe.

While extinction is a naturally occurring phenomenon that contributes to life's infinite variation (Hoesle 2012), worldwide declines in animal populations are critically impacting global biodiversity. Despite this decline, natural history museums are charged to collect, preserve and display tangible evidence of the past and ever-changing environment (ICOM 1996). The etymology of museum—from the Greek 'museum' and its derivative 'muse'—in classical mythology was associated with nine sister goddesses and their mother Mnemosyne, keeper of memory. She personified the critical role that remembering played in a time before widespread literacy. In the form of 'muthos'—word, speech or story—knowledge transfer occurred as part of a well-established aural tradition. It was the role of playwrights to create memorable events that could be repeated. While the enactment of an enjoyable story was important, it was the combination of speaking, hearing and remembering that were key factors in effective knowledge transfer.

Littlejohn's audio recording of the Growling Grass Frog provided the basis for a sonic performance that reflected on museums, memory and storytelling where forgetting equated with silence, and memory involved attentive listening.

Dr Sarah Edwards is an interdisciplinary artist based in Melbourne, Australia. Her PhD research - *The Museum Hummingbird: Transforming Nature, Creating Wonder* - took inspiration from the methods used by natural history museums to prepare specimens. By appropriating these transformative processes, Sarah questioned her relationship with nature as mediated through natural history collections. Experimenting with light and sound, and framed by Foucault's seminal *The Order of Things* (2007), Sarah's artwork reflects on systems that ascribe meaning to the natural world. <https://sarahedwards.com.au>

Extinction, Absence, and Erasure: Appropriation of, or holding space for, nonhuman animals in contemporary Australian Poetry.

FitzHywel, Katherine

University of Melbourne, Vic, Australia

14th Feb, 1:30- 2:00, Oorala

Representations of nonhuman animals in contemporary Australian poetry variously sustain, resist, or bear the traces of, colonial narratives. Imported and native animals have been reconstructed in the Australian national imagination according to the interests of human settlers. Native animals are often reframed as pests that interfere with anthropocentric resources, through competition or predation of animals who have been reconstructed as livestock. Domestic animals who have been discarded are also reframed from beloved pets to out-of-control feral animals, allowing human divestment of responsibility. The language of poetry takes part in this discourse by reinforcing or resisting notions of animals as 'wild', 'pests', and 'feral' while framing them in terms of anthropocentric or intrinsic value. This presentation draws on the work of Stuart Cooke and Michael Farrell to consider the intersections of language, poetry, culture and the nonhuman in the context of contemporary Australian poetry. Negative or limiting associations can become attached to animal bodies through symbolic, anthropomorphic, or inaccurate representations in poetry. In this way poetry contributes to colonial narratives which can lead to real world consequences for animals, such as extinction, harm, or containment. As animals cannot respond to the narratives we create about them, we have an ethical responsibility to question the ways our relationships with animals are constructed and circulated through the poetic form. Instead of appropriating and erasing nonhuman animals to support our human interests and narratives, how can we find ways to resist colonial narratives and hold space for the stories of nonhuman animals in poetry?

Katherine FitzHywel is a Creative Writing PhD candidate at the University of Melbourne, currently in her second year. She is exploring how nonhuman animals are represented or misrepresented through the language employed in contemporary Australian poetry, and how poetic language might contribute to the perception and treatment of nonhuman animals.

Melissa Lucashenko's *Steam Pigs* as urban ecological allegory

Fonteyn, David

University of New South Wales, NSW, Australia

13th Feb, 12:45-1:15, Oorala

In this paper, I argue that the gritty urban novel, *Steam Pigs*, by Aboriginal writer Melissa Lucashenko, is a postmodern ecological allegory. Allegory is a literary form that encodes an 'other' meaning, hidden under the 'veil' of the surface narrative. Although not a common form studied in ecocriticism, Ursula Heise, in *Sense of Place, Sense of Planet*, maintains that it is an ideal aesthetic form for exploring a "deterritorialized environmental vision" (10) where sense of place and inhabitation is located within a wider global connectedness and globalised culture. Allegory's structure of encoding otherness allows for such an environmental vision of the local integrated within the global.

In Lucashenko's allegory, the urban setting encoding postmodern discourses of globalized culture in contemporary Brisbane is transformed as through the allegorical device of a 'story within a story', the Aboriginal land upon which the city lies, 'Yuggera Country', comes increasingly to the consciousness of Sue Wilson, the protagonist, as well as, the reader.

Unlike traditional allegories, *Steam Pigs* is not based on a Biblical pretext but instead utilises the 'orphan tale' as its pretext. In this archetypal tale the quest is for home and belonging. Not only is Sue an orphan figure living in urban Brisbane, but the city of Brisbane itself is allegorised as an orphan separated from its mother, the land. Sue's quest for belonging through the increasing consciousness of Yuggera

Country, is mirrored by the urban setting of Brisbane becoming transformed through its interconnecting with the Aboriginal land.

David Fonteyn completed a PhD at UNSW in 2009 on the use of allegory in Australian literature to depict nature. My thesis is titled “Ecological Allegory: a study of four post-colonial Australian novels”. I have presented conference papers on allegory in Australian literature at ASAL and ASLE-ANZ, as well in Europe at EASA. I currently teach university preparation courses at UNSW Institute of Languages.

Ecoregionally Grounding Nineteenth-Century French Stories

Gosetti, Valentina¹ & Daniel Finch-Race²

1. University of New England, NSW, Australia

2. University of Bristol, UK

14th Feb, 1:00- 1:30, Oorala

Recent research cross-pollinating French Studies and the environmental humanities is bearing substantial fruit. French-oriented researchers are refining methodologies for considering human-environment relations, and ecologically-oriented scholars are addressing distinctive geographies in physical and linguistic terms. In this conversational paper, we shall discuss the making of – and the need for – our special issue of the scholarly specialised journal *Dix-Neuf*, which will intervene in a trend towards a regional focus in both fields through a far-reaching guiding question: how is the changing nature of France during the Industrial Revolution conveyed in literary depictions of provincial environments? In particular, our aim is to dissect this question through these particular lenses:

- What is the landscape of northern, eastern, southern, and western provinces/regions in the long nineteenth century?
- How do provincial cultures respond to the Paris-based political, social, and cultural initiatives?
- To what extent does a lexis and poetics of transition appear in literature?
- Can we reframe the regional/provincial in nineteenth-century France within a larger global, planetary perspective?

The special issue ultimately seeks to explain a growth in regionally rooted texts implying cultural and ecological crisis due to ever-modernising forces.

Valentina Gosetti is Lecturer in French at the University of New England (Australia), following her years as a Junior Research Fellow at St Anne’s College, in the University of Oxford. She is the author of *Aloysius Bertrand’s ‘Gaspard de la Nuit’: Beyond the Prose Poem* (2016) and has edited and translated, with Adriano Marchetti and Andrea Bedeschi, the volume *Donne: Poeti di Francia e oltre dal Romanticismo ad oggi* (2017), a bilingual anthology of French-speaking women poets from Romanticism to the present day. She is also interested in poetry translation into minority languages. Her articles on Bertrand, provincialism, autoexoticist provincial practices, the provincial press, prose poetry appear in *PMLA*, *The Australian Journal of French Studies*, *French Studies Bulletin*, *Romantisme* (with Antonio Viselli), *La Giroflée Bulletin Bertrand*, and *Dix-Neuf*.

Daniel Finch-Race (FHEA) taught and researched at the universities of Cambridge, Durham, Edinburgh, and Southampton before becoming a Vice-Chancellor’s Fellow at the University of Bristol in 2018. He co-edited *Textures* (Peter Lang, 2015; with Jeff Barda) and *French Ecocriticism* (Peter Lang, 2017; with Stephanie Posthumus), as well as issues of *Dix-Neuf* (2015; with Julien Weber) and *L’Esprit créateur* (2017; with Julien Weber). His articles on Baudelaire, Dante, Flaubert, Mallarmé, Rimbaud, Tennyson, and Verlaine appear in *French Studies Bulletin*, *Green Letters*, *Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, *Modern Language Review*, and *Romance Studies*.

Daniel Finch-Race and Valentina Gosetti co-authored an article about Baudelaire, Bertrand and Rimbaud for the 2018 spring issue of *L'Esprit créateur* and are co-editing a special edition of *Dix-Neuf* on Ecoregions in nineteenth-century France.

The story underground: mycelial webs

Harley, Alexis

La Trobe University, Vic, Australia

14th Feb, 2:45- 3:15, Oorala

Bruce Fuhrer's *Field Guide to Australian Fungi* (2005) catalogues over five hundred species of macrofungi, helping readers – of the book and the forest – to identify the so-called 'fruiting bodies', the mushrooms or toadstools with their gills or pores, coralline or trumpetoid forms. The *Field Guide's* subject is those parts of the fungus that appear above ground. These are the parts that mycophagists eat or that mushroom fanciers photograph. They are the parts that have signified in Western fungal cultures, visible to the above-ground eye. They are also the intermittently manifesting sex organs of what can be massive and very long-lived organisms spreading in webbed filaments through a substrate, in some cases parasitising and in others networking with other organisms.

This web-like mass – or mycelium – has been studied by mycologists for at least two centuries, and is of course well known to mushroom growers, but in many ways, despite this, it has remained the ground, the invisible insignificance, against which the figure of the mushroom could be seen. In this paper, I will discuss some of the ways the story of mycelium, as active, relational, significant, is emerging, particularly through some recent popular books (including Paul Stamets' *Mycelium Running* (2005), Peter McCoy's *Radical Mycology* (2016), and Alison Pouliot's *The Allure of Fungi* (2018)) and the webbed communities around them. Why, how, and why now is Western culture slowly recognising the ways in which the ground, or indeed the underground, has been speaking all along?

Alexis Harley lectures in English at La Trobe University. She is the author of *Autobiologies: Charles Darwin and the Natural History of the Self*, annotating editor of an anthology of nineteenth-century writing about William Blake, and associate editor of *Life Writing*. Much of her research focuses on nineteenth-century natural history writing, and the ways in which nineteenth-century natural history writing engaged with questions of language, aesthetics, and form. She has been cloning oyster mushrooms for two years.

The Tiniest Thing: A Play Reading

Jordan, Richard

University of New England, NSW, Australia

14th Feb, 3:45- 4:15, A2

Halfway through Alex Buzo's classic New Wave play *Coralie Lansdowne Says No* (1974), the character of Anne Coleman walks out of Coralie's house and into the sea, never to be seen again. Anne at this point has been a minor character in the play; yet her sudden and unexplained suicide haunts the remaining half of this otherwise light-hearted comedy, in which young Coralie famously relents on her feminist ideals by play's end. Exhausted from a panic attack following her impromptu wedding, she declares to her hapless new husband Stuart: "You'll do." Sharp-tongued and fiercely independent Coralie may be, but when forced to choose between her political ideals and her own personal happiness – she compromises.

Over the summer I would like to write the first draft of a new play that explores Coralie and her generation some forty years on. What became of women like Coralie, and how has their former idealism manifested differently in their children? In 2018, the "Left" have now arguably become the

new moral crusaders, and the “Right” the new, swaggering radicals. In this upside-down world of political extremes, has compromise become a form of betrayal? And to whom? Amidst growing inequality, can one generation truly hold the other to account in the face of climate catastrophe?

My as-yet-untitled play seeks to explore – with humour, heart, and urgency – what happens when a Boomer couple and their estranged offspring must confront their own generalised assumptions about each other, and their own blindness about themselves.

Ultimately, my new play seeks to ask whether our contemporary culture of isolated “tribes” can ever see eye to eye – now that the sea threatens to come to us.

Richard Jordan is a playwright and Lecturer in Theatre Studies at UNE. His plays have garnered several awards and honours, including the Queensland Premier’s Drama Award (*25 Down*, 2009), the Lord Mayor’s Award for Best New Australian Work (*Machina*, 2015), three Matilda awards (2009; 2015), a writer’s residency at Marrickville Council, Sydney (2011), a Creative Fellowship at the MacDowell Colony, New Hampshire (2013), and a public reading at the Royal Court Theatre, London (2008). Both *25 Down* and *Machina* are published by Playlab Press. In 2016 he established the “Incubator” New Writing Program in conjunction with Playlab in Brisbane, where he mentored 12 emerging playwrights. His PhD (UQ, 2015) identified a new genre of theatre called Posthuman Drama: plays that explore the innate tensions between the physical and digital worlds. Richard’s current research interests include inter-generational transitions and power struggles, posthuman theatre and its antecedents, contemporary Australian, British, and American text-based drama, and playwriting pedagogy.

How mangroves story: on being a filter feeder

Judith, Kate

University of New South Wales, NSW, Australia

14th Feb, 3:45- 4:15, Oorala

Mangrove storying works through tidal rhythms, flood layering, and multitudes of encounters and transformations. From across the catchment, everything washes down into this mangrove mud. It becomes an archive of the region, but undone and resorted by tides, floods and creatures. Mangroves have many rhythms that move and reorganise the stuff of the world. Within this mud, everything is in play, rhythmic flows continue to deliver the organic and inorganic, the edible, the dead, the toxic. These fragments move through the mud into the waiting mouths of filter feeders. Filtering is at work throughout the vastness of mangrove mud, transforming death into life, passing the accumulated toxins through the bodies of the waiting world.

This paper will engage with the play of rhythmic flow and filter feeding, as mangrove storying processes, filtering through this story theories of diffraction as developed by Karen Barad. It further asks, how much are these also our processes, as researchers, as thinkers, as organisms?

Kate Judith is a PhD student in Environmental Humanities at the University of New South Wales. Her current research project works with the mangroves of Sydney to explore theories of interstitiality.

Getting my politics on: Ipermie and the ontological turn.

Kennedy, Karen

University of New England, NSW, Australia

14th Feb, 3:15- 3:45, A3

Stories, as the popular academic historian Yuval Noah Harari put it, mark the historical ‘tree of knowledge mutation’ that enabled homo sapiens to conquer the world. Without the capacity to fabricate stories of things that do and do not exist, humans, paradoxically, have little to ground them. In this paper I suggest that the limits of stories can be reckoned with by asking if *they* and *you*, have their politics on. Through interactions with Timothy Morton’s *Dark Ecology* and the broader *Object Oriented Ontology* that he has co-produced and assistance from Bob Walden’s *Ipermie*, I attempt to ground *my* story and confront its limits.

Along the way I apply the maxim, *the how is the what*; a heuristic term that Morton brings into his *Ecological thinking* and his interconnected, pleasure oriented, visions of *humankind*. More than that, the maxim opens up to schisms in contemporary anthropology and broader social theory that are fabricated, as The Ontological Turn. This means grappling with debates around what ontology means, to whom? Is it a discourse - a powerful story - *about* the nature of being? Or is it *a way of* being? These debates ooze into the knowledge wars of the present and they set the Anthropocene ablaze. Am I in an ontological war?

Within the movements for *Earth Democracy*, a space where agroecology and permies often connect, the storytellers have been accused of lying, of romanticizing indigenous cultures and/or of, propagating *a return to nature*. How could this be true? There are also stories that tell us that nature does not exist, its reification so powerful, that a *severing* has occurred. The mythos of those in authority is heading off into space – a trail of legal fictions fuel the dizzy pace.

Wait, won’t I be left behind, the cynic in me wonders, my fire dulls for a while.

But then I read a story, watch a powerful film or stare into a star filled sky. And then the *big tent* opens and my imagination fires me up. I stand, with and for *I permie* and the anarchist earth democracy that is yet to come. Am I ready, do I have my politics on? This paper is based upon the many conundrums and schisms of my current PhD research. It fits the conference call for work produced by academics within environmental humanities and within ecological activist resistance.

Karen Kennedy is a PhD candidate at the University of New England. Her research is titled; Rebooting Social Defence: An anarchist ethnography of agroecology. Karen is the author of *Deeply Felt, Reflections on Religion and Violence within the Anarchist Turn*, Irene Publishing, Sweden, 2015, and other articles and conference papers on revolutionary nonviolence. Since 2014 she has worked, along with her partner and son’s to construct a *permie* oriented, off grid food farm.

Terraform: grounding and ungrounding in ex-situ conservation

Laboissière, Anna-Katherina

Curtin University

14th Feb, 2:45- 3:15, A2

What stories does conservation biology tell itself, through its speculative practices? This is the question I am interested in exploring through an analysis of the uses projected for endangered species conserved ex-situ – outside their natural habitat, as living collections or in frozen suspension. This particular form of conservation lends itself well to speculation, both scientific and fictional: stockpiling suspended life against extinction makes it available for a wealth of practices ranging from managed relocation to assisted evolution, and the debates and discourse unfolding around these practices sketch out how nature(s) become restored ex-situ, explicitly or implicitly. The proposed uses of ex-situ collections make the institutions housing them into experimental stations for more-than-human relationships.

Through several examples, I will try to tease out the narrative links between conservation discourse and practices and wider planetary implications; I am particularly interested in the potential links between ex-situ conservation practices and other discourses of planetary management such as terraforming, and the ways in which this casts the planet as an alien space to be managed, recolonised or made habitable. This peculiar form of ungrounding at work in ex-situ conservation, and regrounding in worlds made possible by the distancing work of suspending endangered species, is a speculative tendency that needs to be excavated and examined with nuanced and critical attention.

Anna-Katharina Laboissière is a PhD candidate at the department of philosophy of the Ecole Normale Supérieure, France and the Centre for Culture and technology of Curtin University, Australia. Her research focuses on the ex-situ conservation of wild species, and her interests include the history of conservation biology and gardening, extinction and counter-extinction, the philosophy of multispecies co-constitutions, philosophical ethology, and feminist and queer ecologies.

Women Farmers and climate change in India

Lalrinawmi, (Renee) Lulam

Jadavpur University, India

13th Feb, 12:45- 1:15, A2

After the British left the Indian sub-continent in 1945, the state known today as Mizoram became a part of India as the Lushai Hills District of the state of Assam. In 1959, a severe food shortage of famine proportions resulted from what Mizos call *Mautam*, bamboo flowering. An inept and apathetic response from the Indian Government left Mizos feeling abandoned and betrayed. Innumerable lives were lost to hunger and starvation. In 1966, they declared independence from India in an insurgency that lasted twenty years.

The response of the Indian government to the Insurgency was swift and brutal. 92 percent of Mizoram's population was evacuated and relocated into camps where they could be monitored, fracturing the long standing relationship they had with their land. Displaced from their agricultural fields and their food source, this agrarian community was once more reduced to near starvation. When the Insurgency ended 1986, the consequential gap was replaced by importing food from other states. By the late 90's, Mizo women in villages around the capital Aizawl, had slowly returned, at least partially, to agrarian life; but the old life was lost. A different way of doing became necessary. This paper will tell a story of how Mizo women have negotiated the strange new life thrust upon them. These women farmers have had to relearn non-violent care of the land; through stories and wisdom of old, they have carved out a gentler, more communitarian space for themselves in an economy that no longer has space for them.

Lalrinawmi Colvom Lulam (Renee) is a doctoral student of Comparative Literature under the Faculty of Arts, Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India. Since 2003, she has worked with communities in India's North East researching their stories. Her PhD research is on the poetics of loss and longing in the songs of 19th Century Mizo women. From 2010 to 2012, she was Assistant Director at the Women's Studies Centre, St. Edmund's College under the North Eastern Hill University, Shillong, India.

The Ghostly Poetics of the Ecological Imagination

Middleton, Kate

University of Wollongong

14th Feb, 2:00- 2:30, Oorala

This paper draws on creative and critical practices, as it examines both the contemporary documentary poetry as a genre and considers how ecological thinking occurs within the compressed form and compulsive curiosity of documentary poetics.

Half a century after its first emergence, documentary, or non-fiction poetry, has come to new prominence in the past three decades. The simultaneous rise of ecopoetry and ecopoetics has allowed significant crossover between the documentary and poetry that thinks ecologically. In particular, the “aesthetic-political zone” of what Joyelle McSweeney has called the “necro-pastoral” recognises the ways in which multiple histories exist within the ecological subject, and that the seemingly non-ecological subject can be read through this necro-pastoral lens.

Taking as my subject the practice-led research of my recent poetic investigations into the history of leprosy in Australia, I will discuss the way this seemingly non-environmental subject—a matter of *medical* history—is linked to the environmental humanities from its beginnings. In particular, I will focus on the arrival of the disease in Australia and the afterlife of quarantine spaces. In locating these sites of inquiry, I propose a “ghostly poetics” of the ecological imagination and consider the way in which documentary poetics allows the lateral connections of history to come into focus.

Kate Middleton is a poet and critic who examines contemporary poetry, ecopoetics and lyric theory. She is the author of the poetry collections *Fire Season* (2009), *Ephemeral Waters* (2013), and *Passage* (2017). She holds degrees from the University of Melbourne (BA/BMus), Georgetown University (MA), the University of Michigan (MFA) and Western Sydney University; her PhD “Echoes and Polyphonies: The Choral Poetics of Dan Beachy-Quick” was awarded the Dean’s prize at WSU. She teaches at the University of Wollongong and Western Sydney University.

‘I know not of a spot more odious’: Anthony Trollope and the emotions of mining
Moore, Grace

The University of Otago, New Zealand

13th Feb, 2:45-3:15, A3

In a chapter on ‘Antipodal Ecology’ Julie M. Barst rather curiously observes of Trollope’s novel *John Caldigate* (1879) that ‘nothing is mentioned about the environmental destruction caused by the mining operations in Australia’. Barst continues to assert that the work’s focus is on ‘the many positive developments made to the British landscape with the wealth transported back from the colony’ (105-6). In fact, Trollope engaged in an extended critique of the gold-mining community in his Australian novel, highlighting the carelessness with which those in pursuit of wealth plundered the ground, then abandoned it, leaving their detritus scattered across the landscape.

As my paper will demonstrate, Trollope was appalled by the environmental vandalism of the mining community. He depicts scenes that are almost post-Apocalyptic, revealing craters, dirt, and stagnant water as he vehemently condemns the carelessness and destruction caused by greed. As I shall argue, with reference to both his fiction and his travelogues, Trollope’s discussion is all the more powerful when considered alongside his comments about mining in *Australia and New Zealand*, and his extended critique of diamond mining in the Kimberley from *South Africa* (1878).

Trollope’s representations of mine-scapes from very different locations reveal his prescient understanding of the devastation caused by the industry, with his critique of the landscape reflecting the emotions that the effects of the trade evoked within him. This paper will consider the emotional impact of Trollope’s accounts of subterranean excavation and its above-ground effects, while at the same time discussing how contemporary critics responded to his appraisal of industrial ‘progress’.

Grace Moore has taught at the universities of Bristol, Idaho and Melbourne, and she will take up a new position at the University of Otago, New Zealand in 2019. Her most recent book (co-edited with Michelle J. Smith) is *Victorian Environments* (Palgrave, 2018), and she is at work on a new monograph

on Anthony Trollope and Ecology. Grace is a Victorian scholar whose research encompasses the industrial novel (especially the works of Charles Dickens), crime writing, piracy, affect and emotions studies, and Australian settler literature.

Storytelling Beyond the Anthropocene

Nelson, Ilka Blue

14th Feb, 2:00- 2:30, A2

As artists, if we truly want to strengthen cultural dialogue with the more-than-human world, so as not to “address environmental issues” but to open to “the potential of ecology”, then we need to comprehensively understand the practice of storytelling in the wisdom of mythology and not simply as a sociological tool (Haley, 2011; Campbell, 1991).

This ‘paper’ looks at the practice of story as a primary means of connection between culture and the living world. Conversely, it considers both the absence of mythology and the democratisation of storytelling through social media, as two key drivers of the Anthropocene.

In this video presentation, Ilka Blue Nelson gives a poetic and philosophical account of her research and practice in this field. It is informed by her Masters thesis ‘Storytelling Beyond the Anthropocene: a quest through the crisis of ecocide toward new ecological paradigms’, as well her embodied experience over the past 2-years living in the bush in search for the well-spring of the culture-nature relationship across time and space.

The question this paper asks is, how can the Artist as Storyteller best disseminate the possibilities, challenges and fears we must face if we are to collectively transform our relationship with the natural world?

Ilka Blue Nelson is a *Creative Ecologist* currently living and working in the rainforests of the World Heritage Border Ranges, Northern NSW, Australia. Her transdisciplinary practice is informed by mythology, systems thinking and the sacred, and sways between writings on connecting with the living world and practicing such connection through land regeneration. Ilka can be contacted through Latorica Studio: www.latorica.net

Weaving worlds: Postcolonial and multispecies politics of plants

O’Gorman, Emily

Macquarie University, NSW, Australia

14th Feb, 3:15- 3:45, Oorala

Wetlands in the Murray-Darling Basin, Australia, have been important sites of political engagement and activism for many Indigenous groups, who seek to fulfil obligations to Country, and strengthen their rights and roles in the management of water and particular sites. This paper engages with contemporary activities by Indigenous women at three wetlands in the Murray-Darling Basin, as they use weaving of sedges and rushes to show both the importance of these places and in ongoing connections to Country that have persisted through British colonisation and up to now. Plants like sedges and rushes hold a postcolonial politics. They have played an important role in, and provide a lens into, the historical and ongoing connections of Indigenous women with particular places, co-creating and interweaving worlds.

Dr Emily O’Gorman is an environmental historian with interdisciplinary research interests within the environmental humanities. Her research focuses on how people live with rivers, wetlands, and

climates. She is a Senior Lecturer at Macquarie University, where she coordinates the Environmental Humanities undergraduate teaching program and co-leads the Environmental Humanities research group. She is the author of *Flood Country: An Environmental History of the Murray-Darling Basin* (2012) and co-editor of *Climate, Science, and Colonization: Histories from Australia and New Zealand* (2014, with James Beattie and Matthew Henry) and *Eco-Cultural Networks and the British Empire: New Views on Environmental History* (2015, with Beattie and Edward Melillo). She is also co-editor of the *Living Lexicon* in the *Environmental Humanities* journal.

The Walking Reader: Embodying Environmental Storyworlds through Ambient Literature

Pâquet, Lili

University of New England, NSW, Australia

13th Feb, 12:15-12:45, A2

Duncan Speakman's *It Must Have Been Dark by Then* (2017) is a paperback book that is read in tandem with a smartphone app to create an immersive experience for readers. Readers walk local landscapes and create an individual map via GPS, while listening to narratives of climate change from Latvia, Louisiana, and Tunisia. The idea is to have readers consider landscapes, physically as well as conceptually, locally as well as globally. Is ambient literature a way of transcending the mind/body divide to convince readers about their role in environmental change?

This paper completes an econarratological close reading of Speakman's book, refers to rhetorical criticism on walking by de Certeau, Mountford, Topinka, and Kalin and Frith, and the turn to walking and bicycling by scientists like David Goodrich, and historians like David Gange. The paper concludes that Speakman's readers immerse themselves in print, digital narrative, and actual environments, and therefore become performers and co-creators of individual narratives. They effectively "ground" the story through an embodied reading. The reader not only transports into the storyworld, they remove themselves from the distant "optical knowledge" of the voyeur and literally trace their journey on foot. The reader thus becomes a rhetor of their own performance that can also transport them, materially and ideologically, into distant environments affected by climate change.

Lili Pâquet specialises in writing studies, rhetoric, and literary criticism, with particular interest in a rhetoric of fiction. Her recently published book, *Crime Fiction from a Professional Eye*, examines the crime novels of women who have previously worked in the criminal justice system as lawyers, forensic experts, and detectives. Her current research focuses on digital literatures and interdisciplinary eco-rhetorics. Before joining the staff at UNE, Lili completed a PhD at the University of Sydney and lectured in the Writing Department there. <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5300-1689>

"I want to be effluent!"

Phillips, Perdita

14th Feb, 11:00- 11:30, A3

This presentation outlines the findings of a short artist in residency in Albany, Western Australia in November-December 2018. Investigating the local network of urban and peri-urban drainage, the project was an attempt to reframe drains from what they are normally seen as — of a way of transferring 'problems' to elsewhere — into a space of reparative engagement. Intimate, makeshift walks were taken with drain allies along road culverts and agricultural drains and through snaky, polluted and weedy country. Walks were recorded with cyanotypes and a further cyanotype workshop was conducted with the public on the subject of local watercourses. Whilst being attentive to the local stories of water, settler history and regeneration, the project nevertheless attempted to problematize the current quasi-legal and commonplace notions which see the flow of water leaving a property downstream (and downslope) as being 'not my problem'. In a small way, this art project works through the 'impurity of caring' (that acts of caring contain the *wish that it were not so*

(Shotwell, 2016), at the same time that they are *entangled*) with a tactical move that I have termed 'porous repair'. It therefore provides a short example of the complications of thinking through water stories using artistic means.

Perdita Phillips is an Australian artist with a wide-ranging and experimental conceptual practice. Whilst materially diverse, underlying themes of ecological processes and commitments to a resensitisation to the physical environment are apparent. Creating 'anticipatory aesthetics' to widen the potentials in a narrowing world, Phillips has inhabited/exhibited widely including *Incinerator Art Award*, (Incinerator Gallery, Moonee Ponds), *Another Green World* (Western Plains Cultural Centre, Dubbo), *Carry me*, and *Weed-ing* participatory projects for Spaced Know thy Neighbour Project, Perth and *Going underground: Multispecies encounters with rocks and water in the shadow of extraction* (Collaborative event with Astrida Neimanis, Sydney-Lithgow-Sydney).

Autofiction and the impersonal

Pope, Joanna

Freie Universität, Germany

13th Feb, 3:15-3.45, A3

This paper engages a comparative reading of two autofictional works, Tao Lin's 2013 novel *Taipei* and Gerald Murnane's 1995 novella *Emerald Blue*. Though autofiction, in which authors forgo fantastical artifice in favour of unfettered self-narration of their own lives, seems symptomatically anthropocentric and individualistic, Lin and Murnane's intensified focus on the self leads to its vital literary reconfiguration through *impersonalization*. Materialist ecocriticism calls for a dissolution of individualistic personhood and a reorientation towards the nonhuman or 'impersonal' world of living matter, objects, places, processes and forces. By pushing autofiction to its logical extremes with self-observation frequently labelled as flat, detached and impersonal, Lin's *Taipei* and Murnane's *Emerald Blue* offer insights into what it means to perceive, act and live with an impersonal concept of self and world. The unusual use of first-person narration in the impersonal third-person presents the self as the sum of ongoing mental processes. This impersonal ecology of mind is accompanied by a stylistic orientation to the nonhuman world through quasi-simile, as patterns in figurative languages affirm similitude between personal sensory and emotional experiences and the impersonal world of animals, landscapes, and ecological systems. These formal characteristics evolve in tandem with protagonists' developmental arcs on the plot level, as Lin and Murnane's fictional doubles undergo a shift in their self-concept, embracing their community with the impersonal world and the vulnerability that this brings. In narrative voice, style and plot, *Taipei* and *Emerald Blue* capture a process of narrative sense-making that sees the personal evolve into the impersonal.

Joanna Pope is an undergraduate student of general and comparative literature at the Freie Universität Berlin. She has a research focus on intersections between ecocriticism, narratology and stylistics, as well as in contemporary literary fiction. Joanna also works as a curator for events and conferences in Germany and Europe that encourage public and professional engagement with the social and ethical implications of emerging technologies and scientific advancements. She has previously worked as a non-fiction writer. Joanna is an Australian-German dual national.

Man Shy and Mother Bereft: grounding emplacement, literary engagement and loss in improved cross-species communications

Pyke, Susan

14th Feb, 1:30- 2:00, A3

Funding debates surrounding recent stark images of dead cattle, stiffening on the cracked dry dirt of Australia's rural and remote areas, largely ignore the harms caused by the beef industry. My paper sees things differently, through my mother's connection to Frank Dalby Davison's *Man Shy* (1931), a story entwined with her memories of Little Cow, a calf removed from her mother and my mother, at

about the time my mother's mother died. I hear the teary call of my motherless mother, to Little Cow, a motherless calf. I feel the shudders of that mustered heifer when briefly reunited with my mother in the churning dirt of a six-foot high holding pen. My response to the communications between my mother and Little Cow draws upon Wendy Wheeler's biosemiotics, Karen Barad's agential cut, my own life as a dairy-farmer's daughter and my involvement in critical animal studies. The attentive and vulnerable co-affectivity between my mother and Little Cow might be familiar to other humans who talk with bovines hoof to foot. Such cross-species communications depend on the readiness of the creatures involved to respond to each other. This attentive animal signalling, that requires and produces important co-affectivities and affinities, is, as in my case, often socialized and reinforced through familial norms. As Davison's stories of a runaway heifer meet my mother's mustering tales, I begin to imagine enhanced cross-species relations, experienced on healthy ground shared in common. This requires imagining Little Cow and others of her species as bodies, but not meat.

Susan Pyke spends a lot of time grounded in the red-brown dirt of the Stony Rises, book, pen or computer in hand. She also teaches creative writing, literature and environmental studies at the University of Melbourne. Her recently published works include "Citizen Snake" (in *The Materiality of Love*, Routledge 2017), "Creaturely Shifts" (in *Text Journal*, 2017) and "Cathy's Whip and Heathcliff's Snarl" (in *Animals in Victorian Literature and Culture*, Palgrave 2017). Her monograph *Animal Visions* is forthcoming (Palgrave). For details on these works and other publications see <https://unimelb.academia.edu/SusanPyke>. Susan twitters as SueHallPyke and blogs at <http://suehallpyke.com>.

Space junk topographies at the pole of inaccessibility

Reid, Susan

University of Sydney, NSW, Australia

13th Feb, 2:45-3:15, Oorala

Currents move indiscriminately across ocean basins with a sensory responsiveness that connects the seafloor through the water column to the surface. Feeling along seafloor topography, a current's journey can be projected in equivalent sea surface temperature patterns. These projections transition livability conditions and watery habitats.

This paper takes a speculative journey with the currents across the 'pole of inaccessibility', where the 'nearest humans are often astronauts'; and where fields of fallen space junk scaffold and shape seafloor topographies anew. Where the fall of once abundant large animals provided decades of nutrient for seabed life, the bones of hundreds of spacecraft and cargo ships rest there instead. Projections of MIR, Russia's 120 ton decommissioned space station, titanium fuel tanks and satellites echo new topographies through the water column.

The act of reaching out for another satellite network link can be seen as an ecological element with potential to influence habitability for some, but not others. My junk device enablers fall silent, interrupt seafloor ecologies, meet the currents, change the shape of the ocean, and contribute to watery living. How might ocean life transition in the watery imprint of space research junk and spent communications technologies?

I draw on the intellectual resources of feminist posthumanism, in particular, to approach the challenge of bringing visibility to these remote, poorly represented and difficult to experience worlds and the impact of my material consumptions. Through a lyrical theoretical approach I speculate with the currents and take imaginative license to craft what Neimanis might describe as their and my 'proxy stories'.

Susan Reid is a PhD candidate in the Department of Gender and Cultural Studies at the University of Sydney, where she brings cultural studies and legal philosophical perspectives to research ocean imaginaries and environmental justice. Susan is a lawyer, artist, curator and writer with a LLM in

International Law and a Masters of Design. Susan is passionate about environmental justice and is active with a number of environmental advocacy groups.

Life-worlding: Wayfinding the new ecology

Satchell, Kim

Southern Cross University, NSW, Australia

13th Feb, 3:45- 4:15, A2

The traction creative expression offers to the affirmation of life is vital to conveying meaning and purpose in the context of overwhelming challenges. As an environmental cultural producer not solely reliant on rational explanation to offer compelling arguments or the recourse to use reams of statistics as blunt tools, one is instead able to concentrate on the aim of meaningful engagement in complex forms of personhood. The conviviality of story-telling warms the distillation of wisdom and lived experience, where ordinary experiences become ecological touchstones unfolded with the significance of mysteries that awaken and shift consciousness in ways directly relevant to the conduct of everyday life. This supports societal shifts toward environmental awareness as a path through the maze of intractable dilemmas and ethical alternatives that serve to resolve the propensity to elide responsibility. These self-conscious and critical perspectives, open-up a communicative dialogue with the world in the form of onto-poetics that affirm ecological literacy as a fundamental skill for living. In this paper I discuss the value of blue eco-poetics for intuitive reading and self-reflexive explication on the edge of the fold of a changing climate. I offer beachcombing as the interpretive lens for life-worlding through oceanic reverie and liminality.

Kim Satchell is a surfer, poet, academic, environmental philosopher and doctoral candidate, based at Southern Cross University (Coffs Harbour) with research interests in studies in creativity, everyday life studies, spirituality, religious studies and the environmental humanities. Published in leading academic journals the *Cultural Studies Review*, *Performance Paradigm*, *Continuum* and *TEXT*. Thesis title ~ Just coasting: The confluence of space, place and ecology (under examination).

We are sending a Scottish Landscape

Scarth, Elinor and Leonie Mhari

Edinburgh, Scotland

13th Feb, 2:15-2:45, A3

To whom it may concern,

We are sending a Scottish landscape
to the University of New England, Australia.
It is being held in a wardrobe trunk.
Carefully enclosed within are:
sketches, reels, reems,
light, so much light,
lino prints, water sculptures,
cyanotypes.
It is a fine distillation of a landscape.

Unbuckle and open wide,
let the light out,
a mix tape of images and interferences.
Project yourself on to them,
make shadows in them.

Act, stand still.
Listen to the hum of the projector,
the stories of the projections.

It is being exported to you
by airmail.
We hope it is not delayed,
it's been with you so long already
in Armidale, Invergowrie, Aberfoyle.
We hope it's not too late
for Boorolong or Wollomombi.
Would you be there to sign for it?
It contains nothing more than a landscape.

If delivered, return to sender

This is a wardrobe trunk sent to Australia.
It now holds a Scottish landscape
performed at the University of New England.
The audience have acted in it, on it.
It is cosmo-
polite. An impolite, unpicturesque,
a view of the Anthropocene,
a good innings, outward looking
trunk. Delivered.

This wardrobe will be returned,
the austral landscape it collected,
gathered from under the Southern Cross.
Transported and transposed,
it projects on to,
impresses into,
the *invers* and *abers*
of rivers and their mouths,
imbricating and implicating;
it waits to be exposed, over-exposed
in a northern light,
to whom it may be concerning.

Leonie Mhari recently graduated with distinction from the Masters in Landscape Architecture programme at Edinburgh College of Art. In 2016, she completed her PhD titled 'Breaking old and new ground: a comparative study of coastal and inland naming in Berwickshire' in the School of Critical Studies at the University of Glasgow. Her poetry has been published in the Dangerous Women Project, Gutter, Raum, and Dactyl, and she won the Alastair Buchan Prize in 2015.

Elinor Scarth is a landscape architect and lecturer at the University of Edinburgh. Having been based in Paris where she managed a wide reaching portfolio of landscape design projects, she returned to Scotland and has since developed her personal practice. Conscientious of the processes that form and transform landscapes, Elinor aspires to develop devices, which allow us to observe, understand, and question the landscapes we inhabit. Her projects aim to conceive radical transformations through modest means. Recent projects include the creation of in-situ works for the 'Ville et Champs' Festival in Geneva and Land Art Festival «au coeur des Méditerranées», Domaine du Rayol in France.

'L'Inconnue Ophelia': Re-stor(y)ing water, women and death in contemporary Australian texts

Schürholz, Hannah

LaTrobe University, VIC, Australia

14th Feb, 2:00- 2:30, A3

In 1898 a young woman was found dead in the Yarra River – her pregnant, naked body locked in a wooden box. Unidentified, the woman's body was exhibited to the public, reduced to a spectacle. Similarly, just a few years before, the iconic L'Inconnue de la Seine (The Unknown Woman of the Seine) was pulled from the waters of the Seine River in Paris and her alleged death mask, commercially reproduced and marketed, became one of the most influential tokens in Europe around the turn of the 20th century. Both of these examples show the fascination with women, water and death in the 19th century – a triage that has a long, troubled, and troubling, history. The myth of the female water corpse has been reinforced and challenged in many stories over time, most famously in the image of Shakespeare's Ophelia, whose dead body was turned into a battlefield of competing voices that captured large audiences. Critics argue that 'Ophelia is never buried, but always drifting past as the water-born corpse' (Owen 2007, p. 782).

In this paper, I explore the continuing fascination with the L'Inconnue de la Seine/Yarra and Ophelia in contemporary Australian fiction. Inspired by the question as to why femininity is continuously linked to water and a 'silent' death, I look at a range of texts, including Richard Flanagan's novel *The Sound of One Hand Clapping* (1997) and Chris McLeod's short story 'Floating Ophelias' (2005) to analyse how these texts constitute, re-enforce or challenge pervasive ideas about the 'beautiful death' and the floating, 'exquisite' corpse in the late 20th/ early 21st century.

Hannah Schürholz is a literary and cultural critic, who completed her PhD dissertation in 2012 on self-harm and femininity in Tim Winton's novels at La Trobe University. She now works in the La Trobe Student Success team, coordinating a large undergraduate excellence program. Her current research interests include self-harm, depression, death and suicide in contemporary postcolonial texts, and architecture/space/place as text. Other research projects address speaking anxiety among first-year university students and undergraduate research development.

Time and Tide: Performing Bodies in Peril from Climate Change

Shearer, Julie

University of New England, NSW, Australia

14th Feb, 11:30- 12:00, Oorala

Inherent in all site-specific practice is the imperative to respond creatively to the vicissitudes of the environment. However, for dancers Josh Thomas and Gavin Webber, the creators of the interactive, durational physical performance *Tide*, perched for 48 hours on their 'ocean front' office furniture on a sand bar in the Currumbin River as the tide rose above the filing cabinet and their hands and feet turned to wrinkled pulp in the sea water, vulnerable to passing bull sharks and at real risk of drowning, this intrepid, vibrant performance asked them to commit their bodies to genuine peril.

Crucially, *Tide* also involved its passer-by audience by asking them to swim/paddle/sail out to provide the performers with food, drink and the other things they needed to survive this feat of endurance. Rather than their traditionally passive roles as consumers of entertainment and resources, the audience were required to demonstrate a sense of collective purpose and agency, to take responsibility for the consequences of their actions in a shared world, or these 'real estate guys' might not make it home from work. In *Tide* the privileged metaphoric stage is replaced by the sensorial material environment and the polyphony of a 'speaking' landscape – a boy on a boogie board comes to sit on the office chairs, a wave knocks the lamp over, the sky darkens and the wind lifts. 'Performing' in unexpected ways, the Ocean becomes a dynamic, dangerous creative collaborator. The 'immersion' of the embodied audience in *Tide* is a phenomenological joke, a meme for our future inundation by the ineluctable rising waters.

Tide is an impassioned intervention in the public sphere, turning the iconic Australian beach into a discursive, participatory space, which interrogates and disturbs the traditional demarcations between art and politics. In *Tide*, the real embodied peril of the two dancers exposes the affective, ideological and material forces of climate change, flooding an environment shaped as performance.

Julie Shearer is a Theatre Studies lecturer at the University of New England in Australia. Her career began as a professional actor and theatre-maker in Australia, working with Bell Shakespeare and the QTC amongst others. After a number of years in Ireland, she completed an MA at University College Dublin and obtained her PhD from Trinity College. Her research areas include political theatre, contemporary Irish and Australian theatre, actor training and Renaissance drama. She is currently working on a book entitled *Theatre in Action: A Practical Guide for Students and Teachers of Theatre, Drama and Performance*.

Outer Space as a Metaphor of Possibility for Practitioners and Viewers of Art and Design

Shores, Elizabeth

14th Feb, 3:15- 3:45, A2

In this essay, the author argues that the use of outer space as a metaphor for possibility enables practitioners and viewers of art and design to build social awareness and develop affective technologies for post-conflict resolution. In what ways have outer-space oriented art projects developed over the past twenty years and how can the creation of these new access points in visual culture promote critical discussion in a given public? Whose voices are represented? Rather than using cosmology and outer space science as a way to imagine the future of our species on another planet, assist outer space programs with visualizing or giving form to their projects, or creating work intended to captivate an audience, the analyzed metaphors offer unique methods of engaging with publics by investigating aspects of production, agency, and power, drawing connections between the search for interpersonal resonance and the struggle to find it within a neoliberal system. Concepts of otherness are examined in the context of how outer space is constructed on Earth, creating access points for people to reframe societal trauma and reward a public in order to promote the resistance of a mindset geared towards personal, as opposed to mutual, gain.

My art practice uses multi-sited transnational methods of collaborative design to study how the language of empire in material culture is a catalyst for the funding of outer space exploration programs. Using data taken from aboard my weather balloon, I create Nano-sized sculptures on circulating US currency by electron beam physical vapor deposition. I typically collaborate with artists, scientists and lawyers in a fast-paced praxis of call and response. This research has been published and/or presented at Arizona State University, New York University, School of Visual Arts, Zayed University, and the University of New Mexico.

I don't know if the water knows how it will make its way to the sea.

Sorensen, Jill

A presentation of creative practice with accompanying immersive installation

13th Feb, 2:15- 2:45, Oorala

Installation in A1 Lecture Theatre, E11 Arts Building

This presentation introduces the shared activities of *dwelling*, *thinking-together* and *reimagining* in terms of my wider research in participatory art practice. This research engages visual art practice as a methodology for re-imagining; a tool for imagining-together new stories that nourish multiple knowledge forms, and which are accessed through the visual, the tactile and durational, rather than solely through the intellect. Knowledge forms which may be experienced as reverie, reflection or dream-space, and which, I propose, may serve to moderate and complete critical thinking. My research posits that these often-

overlooked access modes are key to recovering a world story in which we can acknowledge and find solidarity with the many species and entities with whom we live. It seeks to engage small steps toward a redress of the Western hegemony in which human thought is the primary mode for meaningfully accessing the world. Through proffering a *hopeful space of unknowing*, I hold open the possibility that we might imagine into being new paradigms for flourishing in a changing biosphere.

An immersive installation; a cluster of dwelling spaces which provide a site for reflection, respite and small group conversation throughout the conference.

Jill Sorensen completed her undergraduate studies in 1991 at the College of Fine Arts, University of New South Wales, Australia and gained an MFA (1st class honours) at Elam School of Fine Arts, University of Auckland, in 2002. She is a current PhD candidate at Massey University College of Creative Arts, Wellington NZ, working with Dr Martin Patrick, Professor Heather Galbraith and Dr Huhana Smith. Sorensen's research engages experiential and participatory art practice as a methodology through which to address relationships of domestication as a site of human/nonhuman interaction. In addition to this Jill holds the position of Fine Arts lecturer at Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design

The Terrain of Belonging

Thompson, Leanne

University of New South Wales, NSW, Australia

Installation in Lower Ground Floor, E11 Arts Building

The intention of my research project is to transform the conversations between farmer and artist into a material narrative that will communicate restorative land practices but also actively engage, once installed on-site, in that process of restoration. The project investigates water system function provided by wetland ecology, including riffle banks, chain-of-ponds, ephemeral floodplain and the resilience these features create within a landscape by retaining, distributing and cleansing water.

This installation will begin the process of creating a large-scale woven work that will journey and grow between exhibitions before being permanently sited within an eroded gully on Paul Newell's property at Canowindra. Gathered wetland grasses and reeds will be the materials utilised in the artwork and the scope of the research is also investigating the potential to include specific species seed within the artwork so that it may propagate and revegetate eroded gullies.

Weaving is an obvious choice of process to bring together various narratives within the research creating new forms that are not simply restoring function to a previous state, but embracing the phenomenological concept of 'becoming'. What is brought forth materialises new forms, adaptations and interactions. The woven form is simultaneously an entanglement and an investment of time and care. I employ this artistic practice as a form of personal agency but also to engage participation, a shared process to disseminate and communicate.

The installation activates a space within the conference site that can allow interaction and participation with the attendees during breaks and before or after proceedings. The installation will consist of works on paper and photographic documentation from the research explorations on-site and the beginning of the woven piece that will grow over the period of the conference in both material form and through participation and conversation.

Leanne Thompson is a multidisciplinary artist currently undertaking practice-based MFA research at UNSW. Recent projects explore interactive relationships embedding humanity within ecology. Currently her research and artwork focus on water in the landscape; specifically wetlands, reed species and gully systems. Utilising materials gathered from the landscape and drawing on the oral history and tacit knowledge of natural sequence farmer Paul Newell, Leanne creates material narratives that harness observation and data through and also into living processes. Recent exhibitions have shown large scale often participatory installations in public spaces that have utilised solar energy, light, sound and natural materials.

Trust and the Future

Utley, Fiona

University of New England, NSW, Australia

13th Feb, 11:45-12:15, A3

Climate change fiction, as an emerging genre, and having a diverse range of conceptual frameworks, has gathered increasing momentum as being a space where the momentous scale of the potential devastation can be imagined, the complexities, problems, anxieties, and opportunities can be explored, and motivation to act can be galvanised. This is especially so in North America as a mode of political literature, and underlines the significance of the genre as 'place-based'. The impact of such literature on behavioural change, if this can indeed be measured in the short term, is complicated by a more general lack of understanding of how significant personal change is when broader social dynamics and political policy continue to subdue and deny climate change impacts in favour of immediate profits. Responding to this broad context of concerns, trust has emerged as a central theme in attempts, across a range of scholarly disciplines, to identify the problems of confronting climate change and addressing related questions about our behavioural response, both individually and politically. How trust and distrust might operate as key paradigms for navigating the impact of climate change on future society, especially in terms of how our trust or distrust impacts our engagement with climate change policy and potential political responses, remains, however, unclear. In this paper, I explore how the paradigms of trust and distrust operate in the situated and embodied narratives of climate change literature as a crucial function of imaginative storytelling through a close reading of three novels from three cultural origins: Emmi Itaranta's "Memory of Water"; Ilija Trojanow's "The Lamentation of Zeno", and; Barbara Kingsolver's "Flight Behaviour". Within the comparative context, I explore the issue of trustworthiness as our obligations to all others, including future generations, and across species, that flow from holding the biosphere "in trust". The comparative approach to climate change fiction emphasizes the importance of not generalizing from one cultural perception of climate change risk and responsiveness to all other societies and cultures, and allows for a more nuanced analysis of how the storytelling that is central to the environmental humanities is limited by a reliance on phenomenological verisimilitude that is highly contextual and culturally loaded.

My approach to trust is phenomenological, underpinned by phenomenology's characteristic suspension of pre-given understandings and taken-for-granted judgements, and aimed at describing the ways that the characters are drawn as *making sense* of what is experienced, and how they see their own trustworthiness as motivating action. I highlight self-trust as a powerful thematic in storytelling that seeks to awaken readers to the impact of a radically changed and demanding future. The phenomenological approach allows for a close reading of how trust as a driver of behaviour is represented in place-based climate change fiction, and, in particular, how trust and trustworthiness shapes the emergent and radically altered landscape of interactions.

I examine the significance of power relations for the novels' characters, in terms of how they experience trust as trust of someone or something, but also, and, at the same time, trust of self. The potential lived experiences from climate change are explored as demanding levels of self-understanding that are currently subdued and resisted through cultures of self-interest and suspicion of the other, as well as climate change denials. This allows us to explore, through the novels, the

question of whether political trust is required in order to engage with climate change policy or in order to undertake behavioural changes.

Dr Fiona Utley has a PhD in Philosophy and is a Senior Lecturer currently working in research development at the University of New England. Her research focuses on the relationship between philosophy and the human sciences, in particular regarding phenomenological perspectives on identity, embodiment and social oppression. Dr Utley has published several leading articles and chapters (including with Johns Hopkins University Press and Pennsylvania State University Press) examining and extending the contribution of thinkers such as Merleau-Ponty and Derrida, with a particular focus on issues of trust, selfhood and intercorporeality. Her work has twice been selected for presentation before the International Merleau-Ponty Circle, the pre-eminent forum for Merleau-Ponty scholarship.

DARKbody: underground journeys and audio casting

Vulcan, Julie

14th Feb, 10:30- 11:00, A3

What are the lessons we can learn from the underground and from the nonhuman? Creative and mutual acts developed across billions of years within earthy biomes provide rich and humbling instructions. DARKbody is an audio casting. It is mycorrhizae. It is Attini ants. It is opal. It is a spell casting reminding us of alternative ways. Based on research, the audio works blend fact and fiction and aim to plant a seed of possibility in the human species world. The underground is a space humans generally associate with burial, returns and extraction yet it is active and host to one of the largest life-giving organisms on the planet. In developing these audio journeys I hope to contribute to the ways in which our imaginations can re-ignite and move toward what Deborah Bird Rose names an ethics of mutual becoming. What that mutual becoming might look like remains to be seen. I suggest we must look deeper, beyond the habitual surface level and go underground. My presentation is in two parts. The first part will discuss the ideas, influences and methodology behind DARKbody. The second part will be a ten-minute audio cast.

Julie Vulcan is a Sydney based independent interdisciplinary artist. Her work spans performance, site responsive and durational forms, installation, digital media, text and sound and has been presented in Australia, Cambodia, Canada, Italy, NZ, Norway, UK and USA. A Masters of Research candidate at the University of Western Sydney her practice-led research looks at ways creative fiction can inhabit digital platforms and networks. She draws on discourses within the feminist, queer and environmental humanities to explore speculative imaginings and science fiction as mirror worlds of possibility. www.julievulcan.net

Eradicating the past and active remembering

Wang, Jamie

University of Sydney, NSW, Australia

14th Feb, 10:30- 11:00, Oorala

The Singaporean documentary *Moving House* (2001) depicts the story of the Chew family, one of the 55,000 families who were forced to exhume the remains of their parents and transplant them to a columbarium to make way for development. Intriguingly, the focus seems to be more on their adaptability of the change than any possible resistances to the erasure of generations of memories. In an ultra-modern country that constantly seeks to transform itself to be at the global frontier, there seems to be a communal “acceptance” of a transient way of living. As the practices of cultural and nature conservation and the notion of heritage become highly selective and malleable to complement

the state's agenda, the stories of the past, present and future are reworked to fit with a particular green modern narrative.

The paper focuses on versions of practices of conservation (urban renewal and urban-nature) as they displace, uproot and relocate humans and non-humans. I explore the multiple temporalities of these processes to draw on how the making and representations of time is used to legitimise modernisation and to manage diversity (Greenhouse 1996). Here, I propose the concept of 'double erasure' as an approach to explore the consequences of the inter-related removal of the built/natural environment and the second erasure of memory and its associated relationship. As the entwined disappearances culminate in a form of amnesia, it sterilises the generative ability of the past and forecloses alternative perspectives of the future. Through participating in a program run by the Ground-up Initiative, a Singaporean social enterprise, I ask how we may imaginatively reconstruct/re-story the invisible city through diverse micro-narratives that resist the singular, isolated narrative of progress and what may constitute an active remembering?

Storying With Groundwater: Evoking the Affects of Hyperobjects in Climate Fiction'

Wardle, Deborah

RMIT University, Vic, Australia

14th Feb, 1:00- 1:30, A3

Storying with groundwater encapsulates many climate fiction writers' dilemmas. Writing climate fiction stories that encompass very large 'things' over long, long timeframes challenges views of what matter matters (Ghosh, 2016; Trexler 2015). The effects of global warming on groundwater vary from place to place, making it a slippery storytelling subject. Groundwater may at first be invisible, meaning that imaginative and narrative gestures appear at first glance to be speculative. With these challenges in mind, this paper explores how storying with groundwater becomes possible when, as a fiction writer, I conceive of aquifers as storied matter, as hyperobjects (Morton, 2013). I present excerpts from my novel, *Why We Cry*, to exemplify how a work of climate fiction might express the affective potency of localised human interactions with groundwater. In the fiction, *Why We Cry*, subterranean waters matter. The paper illuminates the enmeshments of a water activist with the vulnerabilities and the potency of groundwater. The paper reveals how exposing the entanglements of human and more-than-human lives through narratives that listen for and evoke the deep time tones of groundwater enlivens the scope of climate fiction writing practice.

Deborah Wardle's PhD thesis at RMIT explores the ways climate fiction expresses the 'voices' of inanimate entities, particularly groundwater. She teaches Creative Writing at University of Melbourne and Federation University, Ballarat.

Deborah has fiction and non-fiction stories published by Spinifex Press, *Meanjin*, *Overland*, *The Big Issue*, *Castlemaine Independent* and Palliative Care Australia's online journal *E-Hospice*. She has peer-reviewed articles in Australian and international journals including *Meniscus*, *Mosaic* (Canada), *Fusion*, and *Animal Studies Journal*.

Deborah relishes her 'long apprenticeship' in the art of writing stories that reflect human and non-human responses to global warming.

Hero technologies? A speculative technofeminist exploration of renewable energy transitions

West, Alana

University of Tasmania, TAS, Australia

13th Feb, 11:45-12:15, A2

Energy is fundamental to society. Humans, non-human animals, the natural environment, technologies and machines entwine and flow in a myriad of changing ways to power activity on this planet. With our seemingly endless appetite for energy becoming the focal point for responses to climate change, it is not surprising that alternate forms of energy to fossil fuels have become a core feature in stories of our salvation. A lot of hope and dependence have been and continue to be placed on renewable energy technologies to save humankind from itself and from our insatiable energy demands. Solar, wind and other forms of renewable energy are extolled by certain governments, multilateral institutions, climate activists and corporations as our saviours; a suite of hero technologies that will resolve the ills of fossil fuels and foster a sustainable, low-emission brave new world. But whilst renewable energy technologies can and do lower carbon emissions, these stories often overlook the lack of inherent social benevolence or neutrality in these technologies or those who own them. Switching to renewable energy will not *automatically* resolve non-carbon related social, environmental & economic burdens of energy production and use. Using speculative technofeminism, this paper explores how recapturing feminist solar imaginings from green capitalism can guide us towards renewable energy transitions that centre care, community, solidarity and sustainability.

Alana West is a PhD student with the UTS Climate Justice Research Centre. An active member of climate and social justice movements, she strives to be an activist academic who produces knowledge and ideas useful to social movements and social change. Her PhD is a feminist ethnographic study of situated renewable energy transitions in regional Australia which draws on energy injustice, energy democracy, technofeminism, socialist ecofeminism and speculative feminism. You can find her on twitter @alana_west_

'The water is rising around us': Literary Responses to Climate Change in Australia

White, Jessica

The University of Queensland, QLD, Australia

13th Feb, 12:15-12:45, A3

In 2014, I published the first survey of climate change literature in Australia (*Southerly*, 74.1), dwelling upon the constraints of the realist novel for representing climate change and the concomitant turn to the speculative in the form of cli-fi. I provided a close reading of two examples of the form, Waanyi author Alexis Wright's *The Swan Book* and Lisa Jacobson's verse novel *The Sunlit Zone*, both of which use speculative elements.

Following in the footsteps of scholars such as Adeline Johns-Putra (who updated her 2011 survey of climate change literature in 2016; see *Wiley Interdisciplinary Reviews*, 7.2), this paper offers a update on representations of climate change in the Australian context. It dwells upon emerging techniques in fiction such the mosaic novel and generational spans, exemplified in novels such as James Bradley's *Clade*. It underscores the importance of Indigenous storytelling and awareness of changes in country, as represented in Ellen van Neerven's short story 'Water' from her collection *Heat and Light*. It also touches upon the emergence of new nature writing in Australia. In England, according to Robert McFarlane, this genre has become shaded by new versions of the eerie. How does this compare to an Australian context, in which the uncanny has been a theme in non-Indigenous writing about our environment since colonisation?

In pulling together observations on these strands of literature, this paper will offer some conclusions on how Australian writers are perceiving and responding to their continent's environments in a time of global crisis.

Jessica White is the author of *A Curious Intimacy* and *Entitlement*. Her short stories, essays and poems have appeared widely in Australian and international literary journals and she has won awards, funding and residencies. Her memoir, *Hearing Maud: A Journey for a Voice*, will be published by UWA Press in 2019. She is currently an ARC DECRA research fellow at The University of Queensland, where she is writing an ecobiography of 19th century botanist Georgiana Molloy.

Resurgent storytelling in colonial ecologies

Wright, Kate

University of New England, NSW, Australia

13th Feb, 11:45-12:15, Oorala

The Armidale Aboriginal community garden was established in 2015 as an experimental research site, and a decolonising activist platform, to experiment with alternatives to neoliberal, colonial and anthropocentric ways of thinking and living.

This paper looks at cultural revival practices held in the community garden, including weaving and language revival, as forms of resurgent storytelling. I argue that these decolonising Indigenous-directed programs are working in collaboration with the minoritarian languages of the living world, including the chemical communications of plants and embodied utterances of nonhuman animals, to challenge the colonial silencing of Aboriginal sovereignty.

Cultural revival is, in part, a process of re-presencing Aboriginality in places of continued settler-colonial erasure. At the Armidale Aboriginal Community garden revitalising ancestral practices also builds anticolonial alliances with the more-than-human world. In the context of multispecies resurgent restorying, 'Grounding Story' is a process of attending to the textual and narrative qualities of more-than-human life that speak back to the monologue of colonialism.

Kate Wright is a postdoctoral research fellow at the University of New England, Armidale. The focus of her research is the important role played by more-than-human communities in working toward social and environmental justice, with a particular emphasis on decolonisation in Australia. Her current project is a collaboration with Armidale's Aboriginal community to develop and maintain a community garden at the old East Armidale Aboriginal Reserve site as an activist platform for Aboriginal reclamation and cultural revival. This public environmental humanities research project experiments with novel multispecies assemblages and more-than-human methodologies to develop alternatives to neoliberal, colonial and anthropocentric modes of living and thinking.

Thursday 14th Feb, 1pm
Lunchtime Event – Ground E11

**Write a Letter to UNE's Trees,
to save them from being
chopped down!**

*Speak to the trees.... Write a letter
to let them know you care*

In 2018 approximately 70 UNE habitat trees were cut down and fed into the chipper before management announced a **temporary** halt in response to community concerns.



A further **398 trees** are listed for removal in the near future, of which **125** are **native species** likely to include important habitat for campus wildlife such as koalas,

Write a letter to a tree that you enjoy or care about and share the love:
Facebook @saveUNEhabitat trees
Instagram #deartree #saveUNEhabitat trees
#lettertothetrees

*Dear tree,
Every day I walk past you on the way to work. Yesterday I saw two baby lorikeets peeping out from one of your hollows. Thank you for making a home for these beautiful birds. I hope these hot days are not too stressful for you and that the lawn mowers take care around your base.
Love
Keep*

You are invited to: a short lunchtime walk to a nearby tree
When: 1pm Thursday 14th February ❤️
Meet on the Ground Floor entry of E11 at 1pm (we will make an announcement at lunch). No registration necessary.

Friday 15th Feb, 2.05pm
Lunchtime Event - Oorala

Journal Launch:
Plumwood Mountain
The Everywhere of Things

Plumwood
**Mountain**
JOURNAL

PART ONE.

Wednesday 13th, 6.30-8.30pm
Evening Event - Armidale
Aboriginal Community Garden

“Surviving New England; Our Koori Matriarchs, Part One”

Armidale Aboriginal Community
Garden
Mossman Street, East Armidale
<https://goo.gl/maps/hweDo4hfoVr>



Surviving New England: Our Koori Matriarchs.



Opening Night: 6.30pm, 13th February, 2019.



Armidale Aboriginal Community Garden.



Portraits by Gabi Briggs.

The Armidale Aboriginal Community Garden and Gabi Briggs present

“Surviving New England; Our Koori Matriarchs, Part One”

Exhibition at the Armidale Aboriginal Community Garden on Wednesday, 13th February.

6:30pm-9:30pm

The exhibition will be the first showcase of a series of portraits of local Aboriginal matriarchs by local Anaiwan woman, Gabi Briggs. The artistic and cultural vision for the project is to utilise the arts as a conduit for empowerment and healing, a vision that is anchored in the recognition of a critical need to platform family/community-controlled narratives and to create visible spaces for matriarchs to share their stories, in a self-determining manner, with the wider community. In honouring and celebrating local matriarchs who have played a crucial role within their families, clans and the wider community, the exhibition also seeks to revitalise understandings of traditional matrilineal societies.

This exhibition is sponsored by the University of New England and Regional Arts NSW. Lawn Garden Home Maintenance (LGHM) are ongoing sponsors of the Armidale Aboriginal Community Garden.

armidalecommunitygarden.org

[Facebook.com/armidalecommunitygarden](https://www.facebook.com/armidalecommunitygarden)

Thursday 14th, 4.45-6.30pm
Evening Event – Armidale Tree
Group & Community Garden

Two Gardens Walkshop

Start Point: Armidale Tree Group,
80 Mann Street, Armidale

Heading to Community Garden
behind NERAM around 5.45
<http://slarmidale.org/garden>



Two Gardens Walkshop – Free Event for Delegates Only

Garden 1: The Armidale Tree Group

At Garden 1, we will pause for Afternoon Tea, supported by UOW. We will hear excerpts from the forthcoming book *100 Atmospheres: Studies in Scale and Wonder* written by The MECO Network (13 people). We will also hear from Dave Carr about the Tree Group's Activities and hear some Anaiwan Language from Callum Clayton Dixon.

Garden 2: Armidale Community Garden

The Sustainable Living Armidale Community Garden is positioned on old tennis courts (www.slarmidale.org). Chief gardener Jo Leoni will be here to field questions. We finish up here looking at how community comes together in this special little spot and have a reading of "A Scree of Lantana" by Dr Ariella Van Luyn (from *Island* magazine, 152: 2018).

Conference Dinner (7PM) – The Goldfish Bowl Bakery. Ticketed Event. Those without tickets to dinner are still welcome to come on the Walkshop.

(Pizza—vegetarian, vegan and gluten free woodfired pizza—salad, drinks, dessert, and a band included. Coffee/tea available for purchase)

Friday 15th, 5.30-6.30pm
Evening Event – Belgrave Twin
Cinema

Terror Nullius, Soda_Jerk

Belgrave Twin Cinema
137 Dumaresq Street, Armidale



Soda_Jerk

TERROR NULLIUS, 2018
HD video, 54mins

Part political satire, eco-horror and road movie, *TERROR NULLIUS* is a political revenge fable which offers an unwriting of Australian national mythologies. Binding together a documentary impulse with the bent plotlines of Australian film texts, Soda_Jerk's revisionist history opens a willful narrative space where cinema fictions and historical facts permeate each other in new ways. The apocalyptic desert camps of Mad Max 2 become the site of refugee detention, feminist motorcycle gangs rule the highways, and flesh-eating sheep are recast as anti-colonial insurgents.

TERROR NULLIUS was commissioned by ACMI (Australian Centre for the Moving Image)

Formed in Sydney in 2002, Soda_Jerk is a 2-person art collective who work at the intersection of documentary and speculative fiction. They are fundamentally interested in the politics of images: how they circulate, whom they benefit, and how they can be undone. Predominantly working with video and lecture performance, their sample-based projects have also taken the form of cut-up texts, manifestos, screensavers and public interventions. They have been based in New York since 2012.

Filmography TERROR NULLIUS (2018), The Was (2016), Astro Black: Jungle Are Forever (2015), Undaddy Mainframe (2014), The Time That Remains (2012), Astro Black: Race for Space (2010), Astro Black: We Are the Robots (2010), After the Rainbow (2009), Tap Hop (2009), Astro Black: Armageddon in Effect (2008), Astro Black: Destination Planet Rock (2007), Hollywood Burn (2006), The Phoenix Portal (2005), Dawn of Remix (2002)